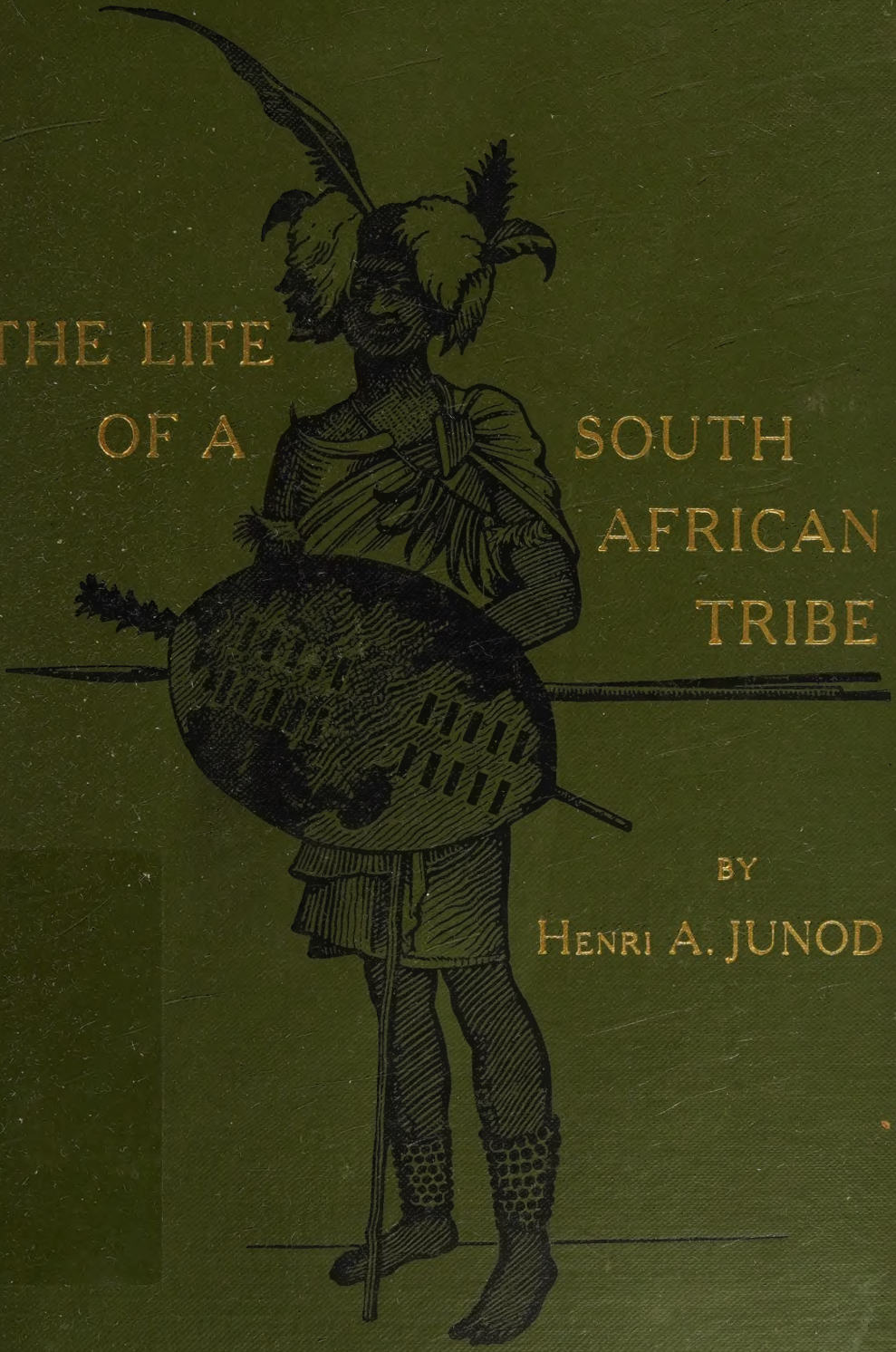
THE LIFE OF A SOUTH AFRICAN TRIBE



BY

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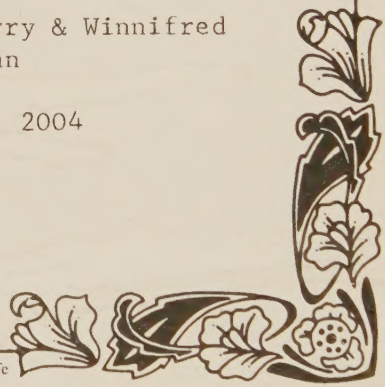

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THE LIFE
OF A SOUTH AFRICAN TRIBE

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The Life of a South African Tribe

BY

HENRI A. JUNOD

OF THE

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II. THE PSYCHIC LIFE

WITHDRAWN

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FOURTH PART

THE AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE

In the first volume of this work, I have tried to give a description of the Social Life of the tribe by depicting its customs in relation with the individual, communal and national life. In the second volume I shall consider its Psychic Life, its Literature and Music, its Religion, Magic and Morality. The Agricultural and Industrial Life will afford a transition from the one to the other of these subjects; this belongs primarily to the social manifestations of the tribal life, but the imagination displayed by sculptors, weavers, potters (or rather "potteresses") brings it also into relation with the psychic. I do not however pretend to draw a sharp line of distinction between these two domains, as the psychic life is reflected in the social customs, and the social idea strongly dominates the psychic life of the tribe.

CHAPTER I

The Agricultural Life

A. THE LAND AND THE NATIVE SYSTEM OF LAND TENURE

I. *The nature of the soil.*

Considering that the Thonga dwell in the South of Africa, a part of the world which is generally rocky and sterile, Nature

has favoured them to no inconsiderable extent as regards the soil of their own country.

The coast belt is an ancient ocean-bed, and consists of dunes of white and reddish-brown sand, extending from the South-West to the North-East; between these dunes are basin shaped hollows, at the bottom of which are ponds of stagnant water.

The pond in the hollow.

The hillocks rarely reach a greater elevation than 150 feet above the sea level (120 feet above the level of the lakes). The sand on the dunes is naturally quite unproductive, but the vegetation, which has managed to develop there during past centuries, and the forests, which are fairly dense in certain spots, have gradually deposited a thin layer of soil, which, when mixed with the sand and watered in due season by the rains, is capable of producing abundant crops. The hollows *(nhlangwa, mu-mi)* (1) are hardly more fertile than the dunes, although

(1) For linguists, I indicate the class to which native nouns belong. See the explanation of classes or genders Part V. Chap. I. *Mu-mi* are the prefixes of

their continuous moisture is favourable to the growth of certain plants. But by the side of the sand *(pfunye)* of the hillocks *(shitshunga)*, here and there, is found a sort of black earth, containing a large proportion of vegetable detritus, in which maize, sweet potatoes, sugar cane etc. thrive splendidly. *Nyaka* is the name given to this black soil: it is found at the foot of the hills which run from Lourenço Marques in the direction of Morakwen, and extends for a distance of some fourteen to eighteen miles. Several small springs rise at the bottom of this gentle slope, and tend to form a curious marsh, covered with beautiful tropical growths, of which gigantic palms *(mimale)* are the most striking. These are seen in forests covering hundreds of acres, with an impenetrable undergrowth of ferns, enormous rushes and evergreen shrubs: magnificent palm groves, where apes, wild boar and large storks find a safe retreat.

Between this marsh of phenomenal mud and the hills extends the arable tract of nyaka. There the fields are lovely; maize can be grown all the year round. In other places the nyaka is parched and dry, as in the valley of the Lower Nkomati, from the point where it leaves the Libombo to the elbow of Magule. Here the annual overflow of the river deposits on the low-lying plains a fertilising slime, as is the case in Egypt. It is strange to see, during the winter, tufts of grass which were carried down by the stream, months before, caught in the branches of the trees and suspended some 15 to 20 feet above the ground!

The sand of the coast belt is replaced in the hinterland of Matjolo, in the low level between the Nkomati and the Bila plain, etc. by another kind of soil called *hundjusi*. It is a reddish earth containing much sand but much finer and more fertile than the sand proper.

On leaving the coast belt we reach the Lebombo and Longwe hills, which are composed of a hard reddish porphyraceous stone. Further West, a broad plain extends from the Lebombo to the Drakensberg Mountains, in some places consisting of a greyish

singular and plural of Cl. II. When a noun begins with *shi,* it belongs to Cl. shi-psi, with *li* to Cl. li-tin, with *bu* to the Class bu-ma. As a rule nouns will be given under their singular form.

Phot. P. Berthoud.

Mimale palmtrees in the marshes near Lourenço Marques.

or brownish clay, in other regions very dry and stony. The foot of the Drakensberg is very fertile, as water flows abundantly from the mountain gorges. Some rivers, however,

when reaching the Low Country, dry up entirely, at least during the winter time.

The soil of Spelonken is of a similar nature and very well watered. So the Thonga, who settled in Zoutpansberg, found there a soil which was, in certain respects, more favourable to agriculture than their sandy dunes or their hundjusi on the Coast.

Such is Mother Earth for the Thonga. They call it *misaba*, the plural form of nsaba, grains of sand. This word plainly shows that they come from sandy regions. For them the earth is a collection of grains of sand.

II. *Native System of Land Tenure.*

The native population, taken as a whole, is a very sparse one; let us consider the Ronga territory, for instance: 100 000 souls in a territory which may be estimated at 5000 square miles; this gives a population of only 20 per square mile. The country is, however, very unequally peopled. Natives will only settle in spots where water is found, and, the sand dunes to which I have previously referred being exceedingly dry, they mainly inhabit the slopes of the hills and the immediate neighbourhood of the marshes already described.

To confine myself, amongst the Ronga, to the region in which I have principally itinerated, that is to say the environs of Rikatla, the villages of Nondwane, which extend along a somewhat narrow strip (800 yards wide by 5 miles in length), stretching from the border of Mabota as far as Morakwen, contained in 1880 a population which I should estimate at about 1100 souls (1). This gives over 350 inhabitants to the square mile. Taking everything therefore into consideration, it may be confidently asserted that the country can easily support its population; in fact it could support one three or four times as large.

It is important to bear in mind all these circumstances in

(1) This population has very much diminished since the Ronga Portuguese war in 1894.

order to be able properly to appreciate the Ba-Ronga laws relating to landed property.

By law the soil belongs to the Chief, but only that, through him, it may become general property. No one can buy land. It is gratuitously assigned to any and all who wish to settle in the country. The mere fact of *kondza*, viz., making submission to the chief (Vol. I, p. 406), entitles the native to as much land as may be necessary for his subsistence.

It will be easily understood, however, that the supreme Chief, however small his territory may be, can hardly assume the duty of marking out the various small allotments for his subjects. In ordinary practice this is done by the headmen of the villages (numzane), the important men of the country, (I will call them A), who obtain the grant of considerable tracts of land, which they apportion amongst those under their jurisdiction. They and their near relatives cultivate the most fertile parts of these tracts, or districts, and when any one (say B) wishes to settle on their reserve, they "cut the bush" for him, "tshemela nhoba", to use the technical expression; they accompany the would-be-settler to an uncultivated piece of land and together they fix the boundaries of a plot of ground which is then assigned to him. A tree, the corner of a lake, a well, or an ant-hill, may be used as landmarks in this primitive surveying operation. The new-comer will clear as much of the land as he can, will till it, and the fields, together with the trees they contain, become thenceforth his property. Should any of his relatives wish to settle near him, he will, in his turn, assign to them a portion of his land, which they may clear and cultivate; and so the distribution continues. Supposing B is not satisfied with his allotment, or is unable to live on neighbourly terms with A, and builds his hut in some other spot, he cannot sell, or otherwise dispose of his land, as it must revert to A, the original owner. On the other hand, should B die, his wife would inherit his gardens. Should father or mother die, the property would naturally pass to the sons, who would divide the fields between their wives. Thus we see that real estate is hereditary, but cannot be sold. A similar state of affairs would result should

A, the numzane who ranks almost as a petty chief, leave the country: all his rights in connection with the tract that he may have occupied for the last fifty years will cease with his departure.

It might be supposed that the title to real estate being gratuitously given, is not a very secure one. Quite the contrary! Once having assigned a plot of ground to B, A has no further interest in it; B is the absolute master of his land and of all that it produces. I recollect one day, at Rikatla, being almost dumbfounded when our own petty chief, Muzila, came to me and humbly asked permission to pick up some of the nkanye fruit, which I had left to rot on the ground! The land at the station (about 5 acres in extent) was granted to us by Maphunga, chief of Nondwane, and here was his relative and representative, coming to me, requesting permission to make use of the produce of a tree which was useless to me! And he would, moreover, have made a like polite request to the meanest of his subjects, had he been desirous of making use of anything growing in that man's fields. I must admit that I have often admired the practical character of the native law in this connection, and, still more so, the respect paid by the original proprietor to the individual to whom he has voluntarily assigned a portion of his land. It is, of course, entirely to the interest of the numzane to keep his protégé on his land, for he adds considerably to its value by cultivating an otherwise useless bush (*nhoba*). He also helps to people his protector's tract of country, and thus to increase his strength; finally he makes certain payments in kind or rather in labour. The Chief gladly welcomes new-comers, as they will assist in the tilling of his fields each year, and the more labourers he has, the better for him! As for the headman of the village, the possessor of a "small country" (tikwana, dji-ma), his protégés will be always ready to do him a good turn on occasions, and he is therefore quite content to assign to them portions of his domain. Human nature is, however, much the same everywhere, and this system which appears so perfect at first sight has also its drawbacks. A numzane, or even a Chief, will give to his favourites the best pieces of land. A clever flatterer, or one knowing how to regale the

great man with beer in fit season, and thus to gain his good graces, will be apt to receive an allotment of good, fertile forest land, while a less fortunate individual, out of favour at Court, will only get a piece of barren hill-side which has already been tilled and abandoned as exhausted. I have noticed this at Rikatla. Muzila favoured his pagan subjects, who joined him in his drinking bouts, and invited him to orgies in their villages, at the expense of the Christians who no longer brew the byala beer. Thus interest at Court works here as elsewhere, although it be based on nothing nobler than pots of beer!

The difficulties of this system also become apparent in the more thickly populated parts of the country, where all the land has been assigned and taken up. The women look round for fresh arable land and may, wittingly or unwittingly, encroach on the ground of another numzane. There is, indeed, a neutral zone, vaguely defined, of which no one has as yet taken possession, as it has not been needed: the wild fruits growing there are common property; any one who likes can gather them. When the population increases, the folk from the more congested districts go and appropriate this land without any kind of formality. Such was the case when the people of Libombo, dwelling on the edge of the palm-marsh, (to the East of Rikatla), sent their women to the hill-side to clear a piece of land which Muzila considered to be his property. This petty chief sent remonstrances to Nkolele, his colleague, headman of the village of Libombo; but these were not heeded. Then the men of Rikatla hid themselves in the bushes surrounding the spot in question, and, when the women commenced to hoe the ground, rushed out upon them, seized their hoes, and drove them off. This was the "fait patent", the actionable proceeding, which was necessary in order to have the matter brought before the Chief's tribunal. This incident doubtless led the parties interested to define their respective boundaries more carefully.

To go and till another's land would be quite impossible, even taboo, between people of different clans. In the present case, the Rikatla and Libombo men belonged to the same Nondwane country. There was good understanding between them. The

Rikatla men would not have dared to plough a field without permission on Mabota's ground, the boundary of which was on the other side of the big water-tree (muhlu).

As regards *boundary marks* between the different clans, they consist in natural objects such as rivers, big trees, etc. To define the boundaries of their gardens, Natives dig an ordinary ditch (ndjilekana, mu-mi) round the field, of about one foot in depth, which can plainly be traced even after the lapse of several years, when the field may have become fallow land and overgrown with vegetation.

The question of *roads* is a somewhat difficult, and often a thorny one to settle. Where has one the right to go? And if, after having used a certain path for years, you suddenly find it blocked by some individual whose field it skirts, and who has taken the fancy to hoe it up, what is to be done? To try to come to some friendly agreement is always the most practical course! How often have we not experienced this difficulty with our cart! The agriculturists were the more annoyed because we required a road three or four yards wide, while the native footpaths are only little tracks of 15 to 20 inches in width. Being the only "carriage folk" in the district, we often had to ask permission to be allowed to pass, and have rarely met with any kind of refusal, for the Black is a reasonable being and quite appreciates the fact that roads are a necessity. If they see that a road is "ripening" (wupfile), viz., that it is more and more frequently used, they bow before the facts; here, as everywhere else, the custom makes the law.

At the present moment matters have been made much more simple as the Portuguese Government has constructed wide highways in all the more frequented parts of the country.

B. PRODUCTS OF THE SOIL

I. *Cereals.*

"Hosi ya psone i *psithjama*" — "Their king is the *maize*", says Mboza. This cereal is indeed the most widely cultivated in

Thongaland. It is called *psifake* in Djonga. In the more fertile regions of the North, the size of the cobs and of the grains (nhleke, yin-tin) is much larger than on the sandy dunes of the Ba-Ronga. So the people of Khosen make fun of the Ba-Thonga and compare their mealies with the small pimples of their tattooing (tinhleke ta Ba-Ronga). If the maize is the most appreciated cereal, it is certainly not the most ancient known to the tribe. Owing to its modernity, no doubt, it is not subject to any taboo. It is sown and harvested without any rite. At Christmas time, when the first cobs are edible, people joyfully feast on the new crop. They cook some of them in the ashes, but they allow the rest to ripen and dry upon the stalks. Although no taboo prevents any owner of a field from eating the first mealies whenever it suits him, Mboza asserts that people who have obtained green mealies before the other inhabitants of the village, do not precede them in the enjoyment of this much appreciated food : " It would cause jealousy amongst them ". This reason is perhaps at the bottom of the luma taboo (I, p. 367). Moreover they fear lest they would have to share their good luck with all their friends !

Next in importance comes the *mabele* (plur. of bele, dji-ma (Ro.), ñwahuba (Dj.)), the *millet* or *Kafir corn*. It is the well-known millet which we give to birds in cages, small, round, blackish grains which grow on a stem 3 to 5 feet high, in elongated cylindrical ears. Kafir corn is pounded, or ground, and may be eaten in the form of flour. But its main use is to provide the yeast for the Kafir beer. As already pointed out (I. p. 40) the mabele is one of the oldest cereals known to the Thonga. It is the ritual cereal, the one used for the "shimhimbi", the dish offered to the confined mother or prepared for the luma ceremony. Its seeds undergo a certain treatment before being sown : the sub-chief blows upon them after having taken a small piece of a certain root in his mouth; this root, a kind of ndjao found in the mountains, is supposed to have the power of keeping the ants away from the seeds. He distributes the treated seeds amongst his people, and every one mixes some of them with his own supply. Men of the reigning family alone possess that

root. Later on, when the time for sowing has come, it is taboo for subjects to precede their chiefs or sub-chiefs, in sowing mabele. The bones are consulted. Should the "madjuma" fall showing their mouths (see Part VI), it is the answer of the gods. They say: "Yes! this is the proper time! The mabele will do well!" The horoscope is all the more satisfactory if the astragalus of the sheep is in the positive position, showing that the chiefs are happy and prosperous. At harvest time, the Kafir corn is subject to the luma taboo, as explained in detail in a preceding chapter. All these rites prove the antiquity of the cereal.

The *sorghum*, (*maphila*, plur. of phila, dji-ma), is also extensively cultivated all through Thongaland. There are many kinds of sorghum: the *phila* proper, with reddish and white grains, the *timba*, whose stem has a sweet taste and is enjoyed almost as much as sugar cane, the *shikombe*, whose ears are curved, the *ntjyaka*, with a particularly elongated ear and the *djabana* with white seeds. The last has a somewhat bitter taste and is consequently spared by the birds which are so fond of the other kinds of cereals that people have to stay in their gardens for months to scare them away.

Rice (*mpunga*, mu-mi) is met with in a few districts only, notably on the Lower Nkomati where the tide provides a natural irrigation and in some depressions of the coast belt, especially near Rikatla. I could not say when it was introduced amongst the Thonga. In Shiluvane, its cultivation was entirely unknown in 1890, when it was brought thither by Lourenço Marques Natives. However a storekeeper told me that rice had been extensively cultivated in the country between 1870 and 1880. As it is subject to certain taboos (see later on) it may be that it is older than one would at first suspect.

II. *Vegetables.*

Three Leguminosae play a considerable part in the alimentation of the tribe: the ground nut, Kafir pea and the Kafir bean.

a) The ground-nut, (Arachis hypogea), (rumane plur. marumane or tinumane (1) (Ro.), timanga (Dj.)), is extensively cultivated, being of every day use in the Thonga culinary art which it provides with the fatty principles. This curious Papillonacea, after having blossomed, elongates the peduncle of the flower which enters the ground and the seed grows in the soil, well protected against the rays of the sun. Its taste is delicious, either prepared as a sauce to season mealie flour, or roasted. When the nuts are wanting inside the shells, which often happens, Thonga call the empty shells *mabvobo*. They say: "The ground nuts have refused" — "Ma yalile marumane". But this is an euphemism. They mean that the *baloyi*, the wizards, have refused to let them grow or, rather, have stolen them from their shells during the night (See Part VI).

b) Another Leguminosa frequently cultivated is the *nyume* (yi-tin (Ro.), *ndlowu*, yi-tin, (Dj.)), the *Kafir pea*. It also grows in the earth, like the ground nut. It is much coarser than the European pea, but is twice or thrice as large and very nourishing. This vegetable is subject to very curious taboos amongst the Rongas. Whilst all other seeds are sown in one and the same garden, this must be planted in a separate patch, and the tinyume field must be shut off from the others by a fence of thorns. Men are allowed to plant them, but, as soon as they have grown a little, women only can enter the field. Should a man imprudently do so, he would transgress a severe taboo. The danger is twofold: firstly the man himself would be punished; he would get a hydrocele. But the owners of the field would also suffer: the crops would fail. They would reproach the transgressor with these words: "You have taken away (hungula) the strength of our peas!" In order to prevent any such mischance, the husband of the woman who owns the field goes and treats (daha) it in the following manner: he throws his assagay across the field, in the direction of the four cardinal points. Then the danger is removed and men can pass through

(1) Rumane (cl. dji-ma) can make its plural either by prefixing *ma* which is the regular way, or by prefixing *tin*, which is exceptional. In the second case, the *n* of the prefix causes the initial *r* to permute into *n*.

the plot. One might suppose that this taboo is of the same kind as that which rested on bananas, for instance, when they were still new in the country and feared on that account. But it does not seem that the Kafir pea is a recent innovation in Thonga agriculture. It has been known for a long time. Another taboo in connection with Kafir peas is this: during the first year of her married life a woman is not allowed to plant them.

Amongst Ba-Pedi of the Transvaal the planting of Kafir peas is taboo. They are said to prevent rain falling and to cause intense and injurious heat.

c) The Kafir bean (mbawen, yi-tin, (Ro.), nyawa, yi-tin, (Dj.)) is a small round brownish seed, with a nice flavour, eaten either green or dry. I do not know of any taboo in regard to it.

Vegetables of other families also contribute to the alimentation of the Thongas.

Sweet potatoes (nhlata, mu-mi) cultivated either in the sand of the hills or in the richer nyaka of the marshes, are a great resource, especially when they are farinaceous and not too watery. Their leaves (matsimbo) are also used as a vegetable.

Pumpkins also constitute one of the chief resources of the Blacks, from one end of Africa to the other. They are of several kinds: the *ranga* (dji-ma) and *gawana* (dji-ma) of medium size, the *shilutana*, small, sometimes pear-shaped, the *khalabatla* (dji-ma), huge water melons, with white or rosy meat and black pips, which are eaten both cooked and uncooked. Pumpkins are not grown for their fruit alone, as the leaves of certain kinds, especially the ranga, are excellent eating, and make a very good substitute for spinach. The flowers also are greatly appreciated by the Natives. Some kinds of pumpkins are used to make gourds and calabashes.

There are some taboos to be mentioned in connection with the *ranga* which seem to be the oldest kind of pumpkin known to the Bantu (1). We have seen (I. p. 185) that girls are not

(1) See in Meinhof, *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, p. 183, the different forms of this word, which was *tanga* in Ur-Bantu. Compare Torrend, Comparative Grammar of the South African Languages, p. 89.

allowed to walk amongst the leaves and must take special precautions when plucking them. It is taboo to plant any kind of pumpkin, before the Chief and the sub-chief. They are subject to the law of hierarchy in the same way as Kafir corn. The prohibition is so conscientiously believed in that, should an old man keep the people waiting and be too slow in planting his pumpkins, another will go to the field and plant some seeds in it without the old man's knowledge; then people will dare to plant in their own gardens. Transgression of this taboo is said to be punished by lumbago.

There are, besides, many wild plants which the housewives collect and of which they make delectable dishes: the *tscheke*, a kind of Chenopodiacea, which is also used as a medicine to induce forgetfulness; the *nkakana* a pretty plant of the Cucurbitacea, which climbs up the dried stems of maize after the harvest, and of which they eat the leaves and also the pretty little oval pointed fruit.

Tomatoes (shimati) are also found growing round the villages, where they propagate themselves, and seem to prosper the better the less they are cared for: the Natives take them to Lourenço Marques for sale in very original baskets made of a single palm leaf, with the follicles artistically twisted. I could not say when they were introduced. There is a nice kind of small tomato which grows wild in Khosen, about the size of a cherry.

Natives also cultivate a kind of *onion* (nyala, yi-tin), smaller than the European ones and they very much appreciate it in their sauces.

The sugar cane (moba, mu-mi) is never grown in large plantations, but you find it on the Coast, as well as in Zoutpansberg, cultivated on a small scale, either for eating, or for preparing the strong *shiwayawaya* drink, which I shall describe later on.

The *pine-apple* (lalasi, dji-ma) has spread as far as the Bilene country and must be of ancient date; it differs considerably from the Natal pine-apple, being longer, coarser and not so sweet. In many villages large plantations are to be seen.

Tobacco (fole, dji-ma) is also wide-spread and seems to have

been cultivated for a long time. A curious fact is that its cultivation is the business of the men, and women have nothing to do with it. Amongst the Ba-Ronga it is sown first in a damp spot in the marsh, in a special little garden called *shibibi*, and, when it has grown a little, is planted out (simeka) on the hill, near the villages. When nearly ripe the lower leaves are first cut, dried and ground "ku djinga", as a foretaste! Then the other leaves are cut, covered with nkuhlu foliage and left for three days to mature (ku pfundja); a string is then passed through them and they are hung to a tree to dry. Before they have become brittle, they are rolled up together so as to form the "mfunge", a bunch of tobacco leaves which is sometimes three or four feet long by 4 to 6 inches thick. This bunch is exposed to the sun on the roof for one day. When the process of desiccation is finished, the leaves are put once more outside in the evening so as to get a little damp, and are then finally rolled up together. The bunch of tobacco is kept inside the house and often used for barter.

The *manioc* (ntjumbulu, mu-mi) is extensively cultivated both in the sand of the hills and near the marshes. The root, dried, and eaten either whole or ground, is very good food but some plants have a bitter taste. But manioc can hardly be called a vegetable and borders on the domain of trees.

III. *Trees and fruits.*

Fruits play an important part in the alimentation of the Thonga, but wild fruit alone, the fruit with which Mother Earth presents them. They neither plant nor cultivate the trees; when clearing the ground, they simply spare the fruit-bearing kinds which grow naturally. It may be that a man will sow some seeds of a particularly good *nkuhlu*, or *nkanye*, in his garden, if that garden happens to be devoid of trees: this is all they do to improve the quality of the fruit. No wonder, after all, that tree cultivation is almost entirely absent in Thonga agriculture: villages move so frequently, owing to death contamination,

accusations of witchcraft, or exhaustion of the soil, that nobody takes the trouble to plant trees which he will not be able to carry away with him to his new residence.

As regards the indigenous fruits, they are varied and numerous.

Phot. A. Borel.

The nsala tree bearing the sala fruits.

Natives systematically spare every fruit tree when clearing their fields and, thanks to this wise precaution, the fructiferous growths have increased enormously ; and wherever the land is cultivated it presents the appearance of a huge orchard.

One of the best of the native fruits is the *sala* (dji-ma), which takes a leading place in the alimentation of the Ba-Ronga ; it is

a large shining, green ball, taking on a yellowish tint when ripening, consisting of a thin shell, easily broken, containing some twenty flat oval stones, covered with a yellowish coloured pulp, very sweet and delicate in flavour, but a little nauseating to the European taste. The sala is very invigorating and is a great and precious resource in times of shortage of crops.

Its first cousin, the *kwakwa* (dji-ma), is of the same shape and size, but, when ripening, becomes quite an orange yellow; it is never eaten uncooked. The pulp surrounding the stones is prepared in a certain way and made into strips (nhasa, yi-tin), which are hung on the trees to dry or over the fire to be smoked; this is what is called *nfuma*. Once the *nfuma* is dried, it can be pounded and made into a flour much valued when the storehouses are empty, and the new season has not yet commenced.

The sala and the kwakwa are two species of the genus Strychnos (perhaps one of them is the Strychnos spinosa) which furnishes chemists and poisoners with the well-known drug strychnine. Does the fruit contain any proportion of this substance ? I do not know. It has never been known to kill any one, although it may be the cause of many intestinal troubles which naturally result when the Natives, having no more maize or sweet potatoes, live on nothing but this particular fruit. Strange to say, the kwakwa stones are credited with the power of attracting lightning; the old women say that, when making *nfuma*, these large white stones must never be allowed to lie in a heap in the open air : lightning would surely strike the village were any such imprudence committed. It is a taboo.

I have already described the *nkanye* (mu-mi), (Sclerocarya caffra, Kafir plum), which is certainly the most highly valued of all the trees in Thongaland (I. p. 369). The fruit is used primarily and essentially for the brewing of bukanye, by pressing the pulp of the fruit, but the kernels of the stones of the nkanye are also much appreciated; they are very oleaginous and a modicum of oil may be obtained by merely squeezing them between the fingers ! They are called *mongo*, and the saying is that they are food for kings, for the stones are very hard, the

kernels very small and it is hard work to obtain even a small quantity! Not that there is any lack of stones! Heaps, which have been thrown away at the time of the famous bukanye brewing, are to be found in the vicinity of all the villages, but the cracking is the difficulty. For this a stone must be sought, far and wide, and small hollows must be made in it of a size to fit the circular nkanye stones; these are then inserted in the sockets and cracked by a sharp skilful blow with another stone, great care being taken to avoid crushing the small tender kernel, the royal delicacy! In times of famine the *mongo* is in great request, in spite of the trouble involved in obtaining it.

Another very valuable tree is the *nkuhlu* (mu-mi) (I. p. 366) whose nuts are the *tihuhlu* (yin-tin) (1). the mafureira. This is a curious fruit, the nut itself being of a greenish black colour, bitter and very oily; on this grows white pulp (bululu), covered with a beautiful skin of a bright orange, which, however, only covers about three quarters of the central black nut. The Natives pick this fruit in November and December, and stuff their cheeks with it; the saliva softens the pulp, which melts gradually in the mouth giving them a prolonged enjoyment of its exquisite flavour. One sees children, and also folks of mature age, with their cheeks puffed out as if they were badly swollen and throats contracting with the effort of sucking down the delicious pulp; when nothing remains but the black nut which is called nkampfi, viz., the product of suction, it is carefully put aside and will be used for making vegetable fat; or it will be sold to the Whites who export them to Marseilles where, it appears, they are used for making really good oil. Let us hope these nuts, so sucked clean by the Blacks, have never supplied any portion of our salad dressing! But there is no occasion to be alarmed as they are only used for making machine oil. The Blacks themselves do not use the tihuhlu oil for culinary purposes but for outward application only.

The *bululu* can also be made into an edible fat by the following

(1) A certain number of fruits instead of belonging to the dji-ma class, as is the rule, are incorporated with the yin-tin class, the tihuhlu, the tihlu (fruit of the muhlu tree), the tindjole (fruit of the ndjole), etc.

process : whole fruits of nkuhlu are first dried, then softened in water ; when quite soft, they are pressed between the fingers so as to separate the white pulp, which is then called *munyantsi*, from the black nuts (nkampfi). This munyantsi is cooked and the fat is skimmed off (wungula) with spoons as it melts and comes to the surface. This edible fat, as well as that used for smearing the body, is preserved either in calabashes or in sala shells (shikutja). The preparation of nkampfi fat takes place as follows : the nuts are thoroughly dried (womisa), and slightly pounded in a mortar so as to remove the thin peel which covers them ; they are then winnowed, and ground into a kind of flour ; this flour is put into a pot with a little water and cooked ; the fat is then collected in a big shell of Achatina and kept for external use. The residue is called *bubindje*.

I do not mention all the other fruits, more or less succulent, which serve the Natives for food. One must be terribly famished to enjoy them. I may just specify the *pfilu* (dji-ma), a kind of insipid medlar ; the *tjhopfa* (dji-ma), fruit of the *ntjhopfa* tree, which I could never muster courage enough to taste, and the *bungu* (dji-ma) sometimes dignified with the title of the Kafir orange. This latter is the fruit of one of the varieties of the india-rubber tree, which grows along the shores of Delagoa Bay. (Landolphia Kirkii). In the Morakwen forest grow the ntjhole shrubs from which the *tintjole* berries are picked during the summer.

The *muhlu* or water tree bears a berry called *tihlu*, which has an agreeable taste. The *mphimbi* bears the *mahimbi*, a large round fruits similar in form to an apricot with a double stone. Both these fruit are used to prepare a drink, and we shall mention them when treating of Thonga drinks.

* * *

There are a few taboos to mention in connection with trees. It is considered dangerous to cut the trunk of any large tree. Should you wish to make a mortar of a nkanye, first smear some of the bark with certain drugs and also burn them at the

foot of the tree before cutting it down. Should you want to cut a nkwenga or a mahogany-tree (nhlapfuta (Ro.), shene (Dj.)), to make a canoe, the master of the forest must first offer a sacrifice to the spirits of his ancestors who have been buried there. If you omit this precaution, you will be unable to find again the tree you have chosen.

C. AGRICULTURAL CUSTOMS

I. *The Agricultural Year.*

At the season which is called *shimumu*, the little heat, that is to say in July, when the warm weather begins, the nkuhlu puts forth new shoots. Though rain is still far off, the mahogany and sala trees become covered with leaves of a wonderfully delicate green. A kind of Composita (the Helychrisum parviflorum, shirimbyati), which is wide-spread on the sandy dunes, blossoms all over the country; a beautiful lily (Crinum Forbesii) will expand its splendid white and pink flowers: the *winter* (bushika) has passed away: soon the *hlobo* (summer) will come.

When the Ronga woman notices these signs, she picks up her hoe (shikomo) and starts for the hills, or for the marshes. Her husband has already repaired the implement for her, at home. If the handle was worn out, he has cut a branch of nkonono, (a species of willow?), which is the wood invariably used for the purpose, and has shaped it so that one end is thicker than the other; in this thick end a hole is bored while the iron hoe head is heated in the fire: the head has, at its base, a long iron point which is inserted nearly red-hot into the hole, burning its way in, and thus solidly fixing the two parts together. This method of putting on the handle is called ku lumela shikomo. The Ronga hoe has a very short handle, sometimes not more than two feet in length. The Transvaal Thonga use handles three to four feet long. The woman has

now nothing to do but to work hard, her lord and master having duly accomplished his share of the labour.

It is the end of August. Two or three months must still elapse before the rainy season sets in. This period of the year is devoted to a two-fold work: the clearing of fresh land and the cultivation of marshes.

Phot. D. Lenoir.

Tilling the fields near Makulane (Maputju country).

The *clearing of fresh land* (ku tlhaba lisindje (Ro.), ku khatsha (Dj.), in the bush which has never yet been cultivated, or has been lying fallow for a long time, is very hard work indeed! Beginning in the early morning the woman cuts down the small trees with her axe (khaula, dji-ma); if the stems are too large she lights a fire at their base and leaves them to burn until they fall. Natives have not the slightest idea of the value of trees, if those trees do not bear edible fruit, and destroy whole forests without any compunction. As previously mentioned, the labourer only spares the nkanye, mphimbi, nkuhlu, etc.,

and sometimes the mimosa parasol (gowane) which provides a beneficial shade for the maize. Then she breaks the soil with her hoe and piles up in heaps the weeds (bibi, dji-ma) and bushes which she has uprooted, leaving them to dry before burning them. This is a long job and requires great patience. The old adage says very truly:

> U nga bone bibi u ku ndji rimele. (Don't waste your time in looking at your heaps of rubbish, and fancying that your work is done!)

This work continues all through the months of August, September and October.

Cultivation of Marshes (tchobo, dji-ma). If the woman has already tilled plenty of ground on the hill, during the previous years, she will devote these three spring months to the cultivation of the wet hollows near the lakes, between the dunes. The gardens in the marsh are called *shiramba* or *mashamba* and are very different from those on the hills called *masimo*. (1)

I will now describe those which I saw in the Rikatla depression. The middle of the hollow is a marsh filled with long Papyrus (bungu), slender Typha (papala, dji-ma) or reeds (lihlanga). They are cut, uprooted; small canals are dug in which the water collects. The roots and stems are piled in heaps, some three feet high, called *psibibi*, but they are not burnt: They are left to decay and shilutane pumpkin seeds are sown in them, high enough to avoid putrefaction in the water. The soil is a wet black mud very favourable to the cultivation of rice. So a small plot a few square feet is sown, a *shingubya*, and, when the seeds have sprouted, they will be planted out all round. It seems that planting out has been known and practised for a long time by the Makaneta people who have large plantations of rice. Mealies are also sown in this region, in the spots where it is somewhat less wet: they will ripen one month earlier than those on the hill. The great pity is that the papy-

(1) Nsimu, cl. yi-tin, makes its plural in masimu, cl. dji-ma; it is one of the few exceptions met with in Thonga grammar.

rus marsh is full of small birds called *nkapa* (mu-mi), which pluck out the tiny sprouts of mealies as soon as they appear and eat the half rotted grain at the roots. So children and women must scare away these marsh birds during these months, as they will the sparrows of the hills later on.

On the raised edge of the canals sweet potatoes are planted, not the tuber, but growing stems, which will bear fruit much earlier than those on the hill. Where water has entirely disappeared, manioc is also planted in the hollows and seems to prosper well. In early November the pumpkins of the *psibibi* will be fully developed and their leaves will provide the mistress of the garden with a good vegetable until the first-fruits themselves ripen and furnish a more substantial food.

When the rains commence, sometimes as early as September, but generally later, it is *the time to begin the regular sowing*. Everybody then starts for himself, because, although the fields tilled by the mother are the largest, every member of the family has tilled his own : the husband has his *mpashu* (I. p. 307) and each girl has her plot.

The native idea is that every owner of a field must sow all principal cereals and vegetables in his garden, except peas, on account of their taboo. So, in a line on the border, are planted sweet potatoes and manioc. Mealie seeds are sown at a given distance from each other, alternating with Kafir corn and sorghum, and in between are planted ground nuts and beans. Look how the mistress of the field proceeds to sow her maize : she walks along with short steps, at each one digging up a shovelful of well tilled earth, and planting in the hollows three or four grains of maize which she carefully covers over. The work is done in haste so as to take advantage of the last rains. The *lisindje* is first sown ; then begins the hasty tilling of the old fallow fields (pula, dji-ma). The crop is not likely to be so plentiful as that obtained from virgin soil, but the same fields can be used for three or four consecutive years before they become exhausted.

Natives have no idea of *fertilising the ground* in any way whatever ; at the most they may take advantage of the manure

which has accumulated in some disused oxen kraal, to plant thereon a few gourds or some tobacco.

The operation of hastily tilling the fallow fields is often carried on by a *djimo* (dji-ma). Knowing that her fallows are very large and that she can hardly cope with them by herself, the owner calls all her neighbours to a djimo, viz., a working party, having wisely prepared a number of large jugs of beer. Neighbours will certainly accept the invitation as they may have to ask for similar help later on. So they come in the morning, attack the fields with energy, singing, shouting all the time. There are special djimo songs, especially amongst the Ba-Suto. One may see them, some fifty black bodies toiling vigorously, making the sand fly, their hoes working with marvellous rapidity! What excitement, what strenuous work, each one urging the other to still greater exertion and all hurrying to finish the job! They know that, there in the hut, ten big jars of beer brewed to a nicety, wait for them and that they will have a good time at midday, when the heat will be unbearable and the work done.

The maize grows and the weeds grow with it; after the tilling comes the *weeding*; this is the work for November, December and January.

It is done twice or thrice for the mealies. The first weeding is called *tjutja*, and is done when the mealie stems have reached a height of about one foot. The second one is called *hlakula*. By this time the ground nuts and beans have grown, and this weeding is intended to be for their benefit also.

In January it is the *nwebo*, the time for the first ears of maize to ripen: it is also at that time that the fields of maize are apt to be ravaged by a species of coleoptera, called the *nuuu*, of which I shall have more to say when treating of the superstitions of the tribe.

In January also the sorghum and millet attain their full growth, and the grain begins to form. *Sparrows*, *finches*, and other chattering birds take up their residence in the fields and begin to plunder them. Then women and children camp out from morning to night, in their plantations, and spend three whole months shouting, yelling and making a most infernal

hullabaloo, with tin cans and other musical instruments, in their endeavour to scare the thieves. This is what they call *psaya* or *rindja tinyanyana*. The flocks of sparrows, etc., move on at a single flight to the acacias or mimosas, close by, whence they make a descent on the fields of the next neighbour. This proprietress is also on guard, and, in her turn, drives off the birds with a frightful uproar; thus the duel between birds and human beings goes on for weeks. The mother and children prevail upon the father to build them a little hut (ntjonga, mumi) right in the middle of the field, to enable them to protect their sorghum against the feathered enemy, and there they take up their quarters until the cereals have ripened and are ready to be harvested. Poor cereals ! Many grains are wanting! Those mischievous sparrows have taken more than a tithe ! In the marshy lands of Lebombo I have noticed the people scaring the birds in a somewhat original manner. A cord was stretched right across the field, for a distance of at least thirty or forty yards, supported at intervals by poles, and on it were strung large snail shells (Achatina lamarkiana) as big as the fist ; when the watchers heard the sparrows chirping on the other side of the field, instead of getting up and running after them, yelling and shouting to scare them away, they merely pulled the cord which made the shells jingle against one another, the movement and noise frightening the birds and sending them off to attack the crops of some less ingenious neighbour ! I have also seen scarecrows set up in some places, the ordinary stuffed figure. During these months of bird scaring it is impossible to get the caretakers to do anything else but guard their plantations ! The little maidservants scamper away to join in the work and the Christian girls no longer come to the school ! I can well imagine that the husbands often find empty larders at home !

The attraction of the plantation does not however hinder the labourers from doing full justice to the national beer, the bukanye, which is consumed from the middle of January to the end of February ! Besides, it is principally after the bukanye that it is necessary to protect the sorghum from the beaks of these winged destroyers.

The agricultural year ends with the *harvest*. Every one harvests his own fields and keeps, as far as possible, his product separate in his own store house. The ears of maize which have been left to dry on the stalks are broken off (tshobela) and are carefully piled in conical baskets in such a manner as to make them hold large quantities. The precious burden is at once deposited in the storehouse. After this the beans are picked (khaya) : these do not ripen much before May, after all the other produce, at a season which is called "the time of beans" (nkama wa timbawen). The ground-nuts are unearthed by pounding on the ground all round the stem, and pulling up the whole plant by the roots. It is curious to see the stalks coming out of the earth with their well filled double pods attached to their extremities.

The men then construct *drying floors* (tshalu, dji-ma): a mat made of reeds, or of the wood of the palm-tree, is placed in the middle of the field, and supported by four poles ; and on it are laid (yaneka) ground-nuts, and peas, to remain there exposed to the sun until they are completely desiccated.

The next operation is the *threshing*, or separating the grain from the ears (hula) This is done with sorghum, and Kafir corn, but not with maize, of which the cobs are generally kept entire in the storehouse until wanted. The *hula* is done on a specially prepared threshing floor in the middle of the field. The floor has been hardened by means of nkanye stones, and smeared over with clay. The sorghum and corn stems are brought thither, and the ears are beaten with small sticks. Or the ears are cut, put in mortars and slightly pounded to liberate the grains. The best have been preserved for seed When the threshing is finished, the grains are collected (wolela or hlakula) in the *liblelo* basket and winnowed (tjutjsha, hehera). Kafir corn and sorghum are then stored in the big *ngula* basket. (1)

(1) It is taboo to weave the *ngula* before harvest, just as it is to prepare the ntehe before the birth of the baby. Before harvest Kafir corn is still *nyimba*, viz., a child not yet born. Who knows if the hail or the locusts will not destroy it? Wait till you have harvested, then you will see what size your basket must be !

As regards maize, it is kept in the storehouses properly speaking (shitlanta), little huts built of reeds with a moveable roof and raised on piles. All the shitlanta belong to the husband, though most of the tilling and all the weeding has been done by the wife, as already explained (I. p. 307).

The storehouses of Sokis (Rikatla). *Phot. H. A. Junod.*

In the Transvaal beans, peas and ground nuts, are packed in the *dula* (dji-ma), which are smeared outside with clay, or in small storehouses hung to the branches of trees (mfunge). When the harvest has been plentiful and all the storehouses have been filled, then begins the happy time of winter, of beer drinking, *bunanga* playing, (I. p. 404) paying visits, etc.

II. *Agricultural taboos.*

The first category of agricultural taboos are those previously mentioned, which spring from the idea of *hierarchy*: prohibition of sowing pumpkin seeds before the elder members of

Dula storehuts in the Shiluvane village *Phot. H. A. Junod.*
(The personage sitting on the right is Viguet, my faithful informant).

the family, prohibition of enjoying the first-fruits (Kafir corn, bukanye, etc,) before the gods, the chief, the headman, and the elder brothers have *luma* (I, p. 367). Others belong to the *special feminine taboos*, (girls not allowed to walk amongst the pumpkins, to pluck their fruit or to pick their leaves without certain precautions, I. p. 184). Another category is that of *shimusi*. Certain days are proclaimed by the chief, or fixed by custom, as sabbath days, on which no one is allowed to till

the soil. In Ñwamba, when there has been a little rain, it is taboo for the people of the clan to work in the fields; they must remain at home. Amongst the Nkuna the day on which the new moon appears is also shimusi. The moon must be left to "become firm" (tiyela, hola); to cut roots while it is still "soft" is taboo: it would cause strong winds and hail. Complete rest is also customary the day following the birth of twins in Khosen. (See Part VI. Chap. II). Some other taboos are actuated by the fear of *wizards*: it is forbidden to whistle in the fields after having sown or until the mealies are grown. This would call the "baloyi" and compromise the harvest.

But the most stringent taboos are connected with the *threshing of the cereals*. This work is exclusively done by women, and it is taboo for the men to approach the threshing floor. The Makaneta people, who cultivate rice extensively, used to cut the ears and pile them into heaps in their own huts and not on the threshing floor. When the grain is dry, they thresh it by trampling on it. Should any woman pass by, it is taboo to speak to her. If she enters the hut and helps for a little while with the work, then the taboo is removed and you, owners of the rice, can talk to her. — "Should you do so without that condition being fulfilled, this person would *take your rice* and leave you nothing but the husks (mataha). Should a relative, dwelling in the neighbouring district, come and see you whilst you are threshing rice, don't give her any part of your harvest: let her crush it in the mortar and take it away husked, lest you lose all your grain and keep the husks only! The husks of the rice which you give to your relative must remain with you." (Mboza). The same applies to Kafir corn. To allow a relative from outside to pluck some ears from your garden, to thresh them and take them home means to "spoil your corn" (onha mabele). When you are threshing Kafir corn, let the visitor first take the pestle and help you before you speak to her.

As regards *tree culture*, it was formerly considered a taboo to plant foreign kinds, such as bananas, oranges, etc. When Mboza planted the first mango trees in Morakwen, people told him: "You will die! You have called misfortune on yourself

(u tihlolele), and other people will eat your fruit!" I heard this taboo explained as follows in Shiluvane: When, having been obliged to move, a man leaves trees planted by him in his old village, people passing near the ruins shake their heads and say: "Look at those trees! They have chased away the master of the village". These two testimonies are interesting, and fitly illustrate the origin of a taboo. The desolation of a ruin has been connected with the presence of new trees, as they have often been noticed together. Hence the idea that the trees are the cause of the desolation. Planting new trees is consequently a taboo! Nowadays however this superstition has died out, and one may see a great number of mango, orange, lemon, (1) pho-pho trees in Thonga fields, on the Coast as well as in Zoutpansberg.

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Answers to some of Professor Frazer's questions on Agriculture.

There are no special ceremonies at the clearance of land for cultivation, no grafting, nor artificial fertilisation of fruit trees practised. (They think that trees fecundate each other by means of their roots. See, later on, paragraph on Thonga Botany). They do not admit that a deity animates the crops, only that baloyi (wizards) can increase or diminish the product of the fields (See Part VI). As regards the rite of driving away the vermin from the fields, we shall describe it in Part VI. There are no superstitions about the last corn cut, and no special ceremony practised on the harvest field. Except the rule of silence which must be kept by women threshing rice and Kafir corn, there is no special regulation for persons engaged in agricultural operations, no sexual taboos. The plough, the hoe, the

(1) The lemon tree is called mbomu (mu-mi). This seems to be a Native word and the tree also might be indigenous in the country. It grows wild on the banks of the Lower Nkomati to such an extent that there is an island in the river, some distance above Morakwen, which is called Ilha dos Limões, Lemons' Island. The lemons are of large size and their rind resembles that of the orange.

pestle and the winnowing basket are not used in ceremonial purifications or to avoid dangers.

* * *

As regards Agriculture, it cannot be said that the Thonga tribe is in a very backward stage. Thonga, as well as most of the South African Natives, are essentially agriculturists, and they succeed in obtaining their food in abundance from the soil which is not very rich. The variety of their cereals is indeed remarkable, but they never developed their cultivation to any great extent, because they did not want to harvest more than was necessary for their immediate needs : there would have been no market for a surplus. Moreover they never invented the plough, or thought of the use of irrigation, or of manure, those three great means of intensive production which civilised people have so long possessed. As regards irrigation, the Makaneta people made use of the tide, which pushes back the Nkomati River, to water their rice plantations, but they never dug channels for the purpose.

Civilisation having brought these means of progress within their reach, they show themselves quite ready to take advantage of them. Ploughs are wide-spread amongst Transvaal Thonga, where missionaries have taught them their use (I. p. 327). There is no doubt that, having been initiated into civilised ways of cultivation, South African Natives, who have such a strong natural taste for agriculture, will in future considerably develop the resources of their soil.

But two conditions are necessary for that purpose:

1) European Agencies who have at heart the welfare of the Natives, Colonial Governments, or Missionary Societies, must help them to acquire some technical knowledge, better seeds and implements.

2) The laws of the country must be amended in such a way that the Natives will be encouraged to buy land. As long as they are only tenants of big Land Companies, or provisional occupants, squatters on Crown land, always threatened with

the possibility of their gardens being turned into farms, and sold to White people without any compensation, how can they be expected to devote much time and interest to the betterment of the soil? Individual land tenure will be the best incentive to agricultural progress. The Portuguese of Lourenço Marques have understood this, and decided to release from statute labour, and from forced conscription those Natives who have become land owners. If I am well informed, they are also exempted from the hut tax for ten years. These are undoubtedly excellent and highly commendable regulations!

D. PREPARATION OF FOOD AND DRINK

Bantu of South Africa being mostly agriculturists are also vegetarians, not however vegetarians on principle, as they eat meat as often as they have the opportunity; but these opportunities are rare, so that, as a matter of fact, their diet is essentially vegetable. I shall later on describe the two ways in which they procure meat, viz., cattle-breeding and hunting. Having seen what are the products of their fields, we can confidently proceed to the study of their kitchen, as meat seldom makes its appearance in the "pots on the fireplace!"

I. *Fire and salt.*

Thonga do not remember a time when they did not possess these two most important elements of the culinary art.

As regards *fire* (ndjilo, mu-mi), the Hoñwana knew it already before the XVth or XVIth century. The tradition of Shoki-shahumba (I. p. 23) shows that, amongst the Hlengwe, there was a time when food was not cooked.

There are four trees used to produce fire by friction (tsika):

1) The *bulolo*, a kind of Hibiscus growing in the estuary of the Nkomati, in the region regularly watered by the tide, is

the best *ntsiko* or wooden flint. It is a very light and soft wood and is still used near the Coast, though matches are now to be found everywhere.

2) The *mpahla* (mu-mi), a bush of the Compositae family, whose wood is very hard and used to make handles for hoes. It grows all over Thongaland, in the plain as well as in mountainous regions.

3) The *nkuwa* (mu-mi), the large wild fig-tree, which covers the banks of the Nkomati and the Maputju rivers, and is common in the low lands.

4) The *ntjopfa* (mu-mi), the wild custard tree, employed to light the sacred fire of nyokwekulu (I. p. 364). It is taboo to use it for ordinary purposes, or to warm oneself at its embers. Medicine-men only are allowed to make ntjopfa fire, having drugs to prevent the disease caused by its use.

Dealing with fire taboos, I may add that it is taboo to use branches of a tree which has been struck by lightning; taboo also to keep alight the fire of a deceased person after the conclusion of the great mourning. It must be ritually extinguished, the idea being that it participates in the general contamination of death (I. p. 135).

Gungunyane used to levy a tax on fire: he ordered all the fires of his kingdom to be extinguished at a certain time, and sent messengers to relight them by means of embers procured from the royal kraal. Each village had to pay a tax for the new fire. It seems that this kind of royal right was exercised in the old times by the famous Monomotapa king. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the more modest Thonga chiefs.

The manner of producing fire with the wooden flint is as follows. A dry branch of the tree is secured, from half an inch to an inch thick, and cut into two pieces, each of about 18 inches in length; one half is called the wife (nsati), the other half, the husband (nuna). The first piece, the female, is laid on the ground and a notch is made in it with a knife; the notch is cut in two movements: first on the upper part of the wood, secondly on the side of it. The male is then somewhat rounded, inserted perpendicularly in the notch, held firmly

between the palms of the hand and made to revolve by a rapid motion of the hands rubbing it from top to bottom. The operator having reached the bottom of the male at once starts again from the top ; so the frictions follows each other immediately. The motion widens the notch in the female to such an extent that the male penetrates and begins to burn it : the ashes find their way out by the lateral notch ; a little dry grass

Phot. P. Rosset.

Salt manufacture. Northern Transvaal.

has been placed there and soon begins to smoulder. An expert obtains fire after six or seven consecutive frictions, especially when using bulolo.

Embers are kept burning as much as possible the whole night on the fire place. Should they however have been allowed to go out, the mistress of the kitchen will send her daughter to the neighbouring hut or village to fetch a glowing cinder. This is called *ku woka*. (1) The ember will be carefully brought on a sala shell or occasionally in a big snail shell.

Salt, also an object of first necessity in culinary art, has always been known to the Thonga, as far back as one can

(1) *Woka*, coming from the same root as *wora*, to warm oneself at the fire and *wosha*, to roast meat.

remember ; the name *munyu* (mu-mi) is a genuine Bantu word. Natives can procure it in three different ways : either by gathering dried salt on the lagoons near the sea (wolela sole), and in the pans (salt pans) on the mountains (Zoutpansberg), or, when salt is not deposited on the soil, they take salted earth, put it into a conical basket and slowly pour water upon it : this percolates through into a pot, carrying the salt with it and the solution thus obtained is evaporated. See the adjoining reproduction of a photograph, taken in the extreme North East of the Transvaal, by the Rev. P. Rosset; a third way of obtaining salt is from a certain Composita plant which is wide-spread in the plains of the Low Country. It is burnt and its ashes washed in order to extract the small amount of salt it contains ! This is a long process attended with very unsatisfactorily results. During the Anglo-Boer war, Natives round Leydsdorp reverted to it, as all the stores were closed and no salt was procurable.

Nowadays Native manufacture of salt has entirely ceased. The beautiful glistening white article has advantageously replaced the greyish, blackish mixture of former times.

II. *Food.*

It is not an exaggeration to speak of a culinary art amongst the Thonga. They give great attention to cooking. Of a woman who knows how to cook well, it is said : " Awa hisa " " she burns "; not that she lets the sauce burn, but this expression corresponds to the French " cordon bleu ". A girl who " hisa " will have more chance of being " lobola " than another.

This importance given to cooking explains the great wealth of the culinary vocabulary. Every variety of dish or of culinary process has its particular name, and to master all these terms, one ought to serve a special apprenticeship to one of the queens of the kitchen. I cannot boast of having gone so far as that !

As a rule women cook only once a day, towards the end of the afternoon. The great meal is eaten in the evening when

everybody is expected to become satiated (shura), and what remains of it is generally finished the next day in the morning (fihlula). This evening meal consists of two component parts: the cooked cereals, and the sauces seasoning them. But the menu can be greatly varied. In most cases the cereals are prepared as *bupsa* (flour), or *mapa*, and the sauce, *muru* (Ro.), *shesheho* (Dj.), is made of monkey nuts, ground and boiled in water, vegetables, India-pepper, tomatoes, shrimps, etc. Or the cereals, maize, millet or sorghum, may be only husked (tlhokola) and cooked whole ; then they are called *tihobe* (plur. of hobe, the central part of the grain), and the monkey nut sauce is often replaced by beans or peas cooked together with the tihobe. All these courses are very tasty and many White people readily eat the Thonga food, which seems to me superior to the Suto.

However, I never very much appreciated the *bupsa* which the Thonga consider superior to the tihobe and which takes a longer time to prepare. The grains must first be soaked for several hours in water (lobeka) to soften them ; then they are crushed, the husks being carefully removed by the winnowing process (hehera) in the *lihlelo* basket, which is spasmodically shaken by sudden jerky movements ; the interior of the grain is then pounded until it forms a very fine flour, as light as the best Australian flour ; the small round particles remaining are called *buse*, and eaten as tihobe, as the bupsa must be perfectly homogeneous. When it boils in the pot, the cook stirs it the whole time with a stick provided at the bottom with small cross bars, two to three inches in length ; she twirls the stick with her hands in the same way as a man lighting a fire with the wooden flint, and this operation prevents the flour from forming lumps. The lobeka process gives a somewhat nauseating taste to the bupsa ; that is why Europeans do not care for it, but Natives like it precisely for that reason. The preparation of *tihobe* is not so complicated, as no preliminary softening is necessary. But it is a somewhat coarse food which, however, answers admirably to the wants and capacities of the Native stomach ! When the bupsa of the previous day has undergone too much fermentation during the night, it is given to the dogs. A little

supplementary meal is often cooked at midday : a plate of vegetables, for instance. Or, if the pangs of hunger are too keenly felt, one eats a little nfuma meal (p. 17) with honey. Any addition of this kind to the ordinary every day fare is welcome !

There are a few other preparations made of cereals : the *mbila*, raw meal mixed with water, the *ntlatu*, a lighter kind of maize flour used for invalids, the *shimhimbi* made of Kafir corn and which is the special dish for women who are more or less fasting during the confinement period (I. p. 40).

Thonga also know how to cook by steaming. They put a large plate (mbenga, mu-mi) on top of the pot and hermetically seal it with ox dung. This prevents the steam from escaping. Dung is by no means to be avoided in the culinary art. They look upon it as quite a clean thing. (1)

Men have now become accustomed to ordinary ground mealie meal *(mugayo)* which Europeans extensively use as porridge in South Africa. They eat it in the mines and in the schools ; but women do not touch it and think it vastly inferior to their own *bupsa*.

As regards the husks they are called *budangwana*, a word which might mean : " that which is eaten by the dogs. " They are given to the dogs, the pigs, and the fowls.

We shall see in the next paragraph how milk and meat are dealt with.

III. *Drink.*

Natives are fond of the fresh clear water (mati) running in the spruits of the Transvaal, but they also accommodate themselves to the whitish, greyish mixture found in the pools, in

(1) I remember on one of the Transvaal roads, meeting two converts of a German colleague returning from an evangelisation tour. I offered them a piece of bread, for which they were very thankful and they moved on some distance to eat it by themselves. I was much struck to see them, after having said grace, pick up a large piece of dried ox dung which was lying there and place their bread upon it before eating : they evidently thought it was much cleaner than the bare ground !

the midst of the sandy hollows, or in the neighbourhood of the lakes, in the Delagoa plain. To drink from a pot, or from a river, lying on your belly, or kneeling down, is *ku nwa*. But there is another word, *ku kapitela*, which describes the manner of drinking adopted in olden times by the warriors of Gideon, and of which the Thonga have not lost the secret. The Book of Judges tells the story of the 500 " who lapped, putting their hand to their mouths " (VII, 6). When crossing a spruit, you will often see Thonga drinking by throwing water into their mouths by a rapid upward motion of the hand. I had never properly understood Gideon's story before seing a Thonga drinking by *kapitela*.

But the Thonga kitchen provides the tribe with many other drinks. They can be divided into 3 categories : drinks made from cereals, from fruits or from other ingredients. From cereals are made the buputju, madleko, byala and mpheka ; from fruits, the bukanye, buhimbi ; the busura, made from the sap of the palm tree also belongs to this group. In the third category, I mention the shiwayawaya and shikokiyane.

1) *Drinks made from cereals*. Under the name of *Kafir beer* are generally comprised all the varieties of the intoxicating drinks prepared from mealies, millet, sorghum. But these varieties differ greatly, according to the proportion of alcohol they contain. There is a light beer called buputju and madleko and a strong beer, the byala proper and mpheka.

The *buputju* (corresponding to the Suto *leting*) is brewed in the following manner : a little bupsa of mealies is cooked and ground (sila) in a plate together with Kafir corn yeast. Water is poured on the mixture and fermentation soon sets in. After one day it can be consumed ; its taste is agreeable and it is hardly intoxicating (Mboza). This was the old-fashioned way of preparing buputju, and it is probably what the Ba-Ronga called *madleko*. Maize madleko looks like a thick oatmeal soup. The recipe in Shiluvane is somewhat different : mealie flour is placed in a pot, with cold water, and stirred. This mixture is poured into another pot of hot water and boiled. It is then left to cool and some Kafir corn yeast is mixed with it in the evening.

Next day it is sufficiently fermented to be drunk. It must be finished the same day for it would become sour, if kept longer, not having been boiled long enough to keep for any length of time. Nowadays the craving for alcohol having greatly increased, Natives do not content themselves with the original madleko. They follow more or less the Shiluvane recipe, but obtain more alcohol by mixing yeast twice with the flour, before and after boiling.

The brewing (yenga) of *byala* (Ro.), *byalwa* (Dj.), is much more complicated. It lasts nine days (I. p. 108) and this is the order of the procedure amongst the Nkuna : the five first days are devoted to the preparation of the yeast ; Kafir corn is soaked in water, and left to soften for one day in a pot. On the second day, the breweress pours away (minya) the water, and covers the Kafir corn with leaves to keep it moist (pfhimba) ; this favours the growth (mila) of the germs which are left to sprout on the third, fourth and fifth day. On the sixth day the yeast (handjelo (Ro.), tshomela (Dj.)) so obtained is dried and ground. Mealies are then threshed in great quantities and soaked in water ; in the evening all the women and their relatives pound them in the mortars and make flour, but they do not remove the husks. Next day they fetch water in jars and boil it ; their mealie flour is distributed in other pots with a handful of yeast added to each of them ; boiling water is then poured over and stirred to mix well with the flour. When this has cooled down, they add a little yeast (kandjela). On the eighth day, at dawn, they put all these pots on the fire : the beer must be kept boiling for a long time. In the afternoon, they remove the pots from the fire (phula) and pour the beer into other jars to let it cool down. Afterwards they add all the yeast which remain. During the night, the beer must ferment (kukumuka, literally "swell"). If they find it in this condition on the morning of the ninth day, it shows that the time has come to strain it off (hluta) which is done by means of a Native sieve. (See illustration in next chapter). All the husks in suspension are thus removed and the beer is poured into the best pots to await the guests of the beer party. In the hut it

can keep its flavour for two days, after which it loses both strength and taste, and turns into vinegar (ntjubi).

Amongst the Ba-Ronga a very similar process is followed. They call *mbila* the flour and yeast on which boiling water has been poured on the seventh day, the name of the operation being *ku bandjekela mbila*. They let it remain in a cask for three days before boiling it, collecting in the meantime all the necessary fuel for the cooking. After the boiling, it is called *phiriho, byala busila*. Empty wine barrels being everywhere available, beer can be brewed in greater quantities than was formerly the case.

When they took refuge in Bilen, during the war of 1894-96, the Ba-Ronga there learned to boil the beer a second time: the flour is cooked twice with the yeast and this increases very much the strength of the byala, which is then called *mpheka*. From the innocent madleko, full of husks, which are as much food as drink, up to the very strong mpheka, passing through the different kinds of buputju and byala all the different percentages of alcohol are met with. The quantity of yeast mixed with the flour and the length of the boiling are the two main elements to be considered, and it is very difficult to say where buputju finishes and where byala begins! However the following rule may be adopted to differentiate them: beer is *byala* when yeast has been added more than once, when the boiling has been prolonged, when the liquid has been strained and when the amount of alcohol it contains is sufficient to keep it in good condition for more than one day.

2) *Drinks made with fruits or other tree products*. The *bukanye* is the most famous, being the great drink at the national feast (I. p. 369). But another very strong and much appreciated drink of that category is the *buhimbi*. The tree *mphimbi* (Ro), *mbimbi* (Dj), has an impenetrable mass of branches on which grows a very nice fruit of an orange colour with a double stone inside, externally very much like an apricot. When ripe in December, it is very juicy and sweet and produces a very alcoholic beverage. The fruit is pressed between the hands (phamasa), the liquid thus obtained is mixed with water and boiled. Any scum rising to the surface is removed (wungula)

and the drink left to ferment for five days. It is so alcoholic that it can keep in good condition for a year and is said to be more intoxicating than wine. The mphimbi tree is spread all over the Delagoa dunes.

The *milala* or palm tree from which is made palm wine, *busura*, grows in forests at various places, especially in Ñwamba, the North of Nondwane, Maluleke, etc. and in some regions

Milala palmtrees.

Natives devote considerable time to its brewing. The people of Phesen (Pessene Station on the Komati Poort Railway) are said even to neglect their agricultural duties and to indulge in busura to a great excess. The preparation of palm wine is made according to rule. The forest is divided by the chief amongst the headmen, in the same way as the ordinary bush. Each headman exploits the milala of the region which has been apportioned to him and which is called *fashi*. He may take partners from other villages. The stem of the palm tree is cut to a point (batla) at its upper extremity, where the top shoot

is growing. After four days this extremity is cut on the slant and a sala shell is tied on with a string and placed in a position to receive the exudation which oozes from the cut. This shell (shikutja) is soon filled up; the owner of the tree unties it, pours the liquid into his calabash and drinks it at home. When

Collecting the palm wine. *Phot. A. Borel.*

there is plenty of it, it is stored in a big pot called *gandjelo*, which is hidden somewhere in the bush. Gandjelo means altar, the utensil in which offerings are placed for the ancestor gods. (Part VI) But it does not seem that the busura gandjelo has any religious meaning. If a traveller happens to find it, it is good luck; he will say: "My god has blessed me and shown me this gandjelo", and he is quite welcome to help himself to the wine. On the other hand, it is prohibited to touch the shell and to drink from it. It is taboo. A stranger doing so would be addressed as follows: "Are you a bee, are you a

butterfly to go and help yourself from a 'shikutja' which does not belong to you ?" He would be tied up, arms and legs, and left to sleep in the open for the whole night. On leaving him they will taunt him, saying : " Go and drink from the shikutja." He may even be condemned to pay a fine, a goat, or a hoe. This palm wine has a very sweet and agreeable taste.

According to the Native idea, *honey* (bulombe) is also a drink! The prefix *bu* classifies this product amongst liquids. It is very much appreciated and Natives readily submit to be stung in order to collect it (hakula) from the holes in old trees or rocks. They generally burn some grass which they hold in one hand, keeping the bees away with the smoke and the flame, and gathering the honey combs into a pot with the other hand. Thonga frequently secure honey in an artificial way by placing a broken pot upside-down in the bush. Bees are attracted and a swarm will occasionally make its home in the pot. In the Ñwambukota region (near Morakwen) I saw a Ronga who even had bee hives of his own invention and succeeded in securing plenty of honey. Native honey is of a brownish, blackish hue. When eating it, Thonga do not at all despise the larvae : are they not meat ? !

3) *The Shiwayawaya and Shikokiyane drinks.* The various kinds of beer and drinks made from fruit were not, however, enough for the Thonga. They saw that White people used sugar-cane to distil rum and they tried to do the same. The result of their attempt is called *Shiwayawaya*. Inhambane Natives seem to have been the first to brew it ; their kinsmen of the Lourenço Marques district soon followed their example. They crush the sugar-cane in a mortar, after having poured some water into it ; then they collect the crushed cane in a sack, press it, and extract all the liquid they can in one or two barrels. During the night a fire is lighted in a hut, near the barrels, to warm them, and someone must keep watch all the night, removing the scum and preventing the liquid from rising or overflowing. It then ferments and becomes very alcoholic. Where shiwayawaya is drunk, quarrels and blows are sure to follow. The adjoining plate from a photograph, taken near

Antioka (Khosen), shows a primitive Native press used for the preparation of sugar-cane drink. The crushing operation takes place in the large hollowed trunk of a tree and the liquid flows out, through a pipe fixed in its lower extremity, into a pot.

The *shikokiyane* is prepared from Golden Syrup bought from the stores. A large quantity of the tins of this innocent

Sugar-cane press, Magule (Khosen country). *Phot. A. Clerc.*

" missionary jam ", at it is called in South Africa, imported in Johannesburg, is used not by missionaries but by Natives of the Compounds who brew shikokiyane in big empty oil cans. Some of the more civilised do quite a trade in this strong drink, selling it illicitly on Sundays to their unsophisticated brethren, who thus reach the happy state of drunkenness in which they so much delight, and which is not allowed by the regulations of the Compounds.

A number of other drinks have been invented by the South African Natives, but the foregoing are the principal ones.

Alcoholism and the South African tribe.

The craving of the Bantu of South Africa for alcohol is by no means a result of civilisation. The race, being of a weak character, always gave way to drunkenness. Deprived of true religious and moral principles, it was exposed, as all primitive races are, to the excesses of that dangerous passion. The beer-drinking parties are as old as the tribe itself, or at any rate, as ancient as the introduction of cereals !

But it must be confessed that civilisation has terribly developed this natural instinct. In former times, Natives could get intoxicated from time to time, the chiefs more frequently than their subjects, owing to the shirwalo taxation (I. p. 377). But the brewing took nine days ! In the meantime the inmates of the village were obliged to keep sober. Now all that is changed. Where the law does not prohibit the sale of liquor to Natives, they can buy as much as they like every day ; so we see some of them constantly under the influence of drink as long as they have money wherewith to purchase it, and we can already notice the progressive alcoholisation of the entire population. I lived for many years in a Colony where there is no liquor law. Formerly German rum was sold all over the country by thousands of flagons, and I saw even children drinking it with avidity, although they shivered whilst swallowing the deadly drug ! Later on it was prohibited and replaced by what is called "Vinho colonial", which, however, was no great improvement. According to the late E. Torre do Valle, a great friend of the Ba-Ronga, and a man who strongly deprecated that liquor trade, this is an adulterated mixture in which tobacco, India-pepper, etc. are used to give pungency to the taste, and where but little natural wine is to be found. When a White man enters an up-country store and wants something to drink, the Banyan who retails this mixture from three barrels standing on the end of the counter, refuses to give him any of it, saying : "This is for Natives and not for White men". Round Lourenço Marques there are hundreds of such bars, and although the Authorities have tried to diminish their number, drunkenness in the Native Location is something dreadful and almost incredible. Let the visitor go on Saturday night or on Sunday, along the avenues of Majlanganen (I. p. 203), where the galvanised iron stores stretch without interruption in all directions ; let him see women, men, youngsters dancing on the road in front of the bar, falling on the ground, spending their last penny to get drink under the

eyes of the amused storekeeper, and he will see what an unrestricted sale of drink to the Blacks means. It is simply horrible to contemplate; morally it is a most reprehensible, economically a most deplorable, physically a most dangerous state of things. I will not deal here with the moral side of the question; let us merely consider what is the result of this liquor trade on the health and on the economic future of the Black race:

1) That it *kills* hundreds of Natives, there is no doubt. Whatever stamina the race may possess, can it long resist the deadly effects of an inferior, unwholesome kind of drink absorbed in such enormous quantities? Coffee must be *kweba*, drunk in sips, but wine according to Natives, must be *nwa*, viz., drunk "à plein gosier" like water! We saw the young chief Shongele, heir of the Khosen clan, son of Magudju, die miserably from delirium tremens, and many other chiefs and sub-chiefs followed his example. For years they led a disgusting life, being half drunk all the time, no longer able to preside over the tribal court, or to govern their people, having entirely lost the dignity of manner and the sense of position which was so remarkable amongst Bantu rulers, clapping their hands and abjectly entreating the White visitor to give them *sope* (Native name for brandy).

Hand in hand with drunkenness goes immorality, and immorality as practised in that hell, means the unchecked propagation of syphilis. According to medical authority, ninety per cent of the Natives round the town of Lourenço Marques are now contaminated. The girls who come on Saturday to sell their produce on the market and who sleep two nights in the Native town, giving themselves, for a few pence, to one of the hundreds of boys working on the wharf, propagate the disease in the interior, and all this means the rapid destruction of a race which was made to live, and had great possibilities before it.

During the war of 1894, a merchant in the town of Lourenço Marques said to me cynically: "The Natives are troublesome! Let them be given as much alcohol as they like and we shall soon get rid of them."

2) Alcohol will kill the Black race in the long run. It is already *ruining the kafir trade*. Those who uphold the liquor traffic, in order to increase the Revenue of the Colony, ought to obtain the opinion of the traders who do not deal in liquor. These merchants, who try to create new wants, to develop a healthy and useful trade amongst Natives, in a word to civilise them, would testify that selling strong drink to the Natives means preventing their buying anything else.

The craving for alcohol is such that all the money is spent on it and clothing, better food, ploughs, live stock, etc., are no longer cared for. The *consuming power* of the Black race for European goods which might become enormous, is thus curtailed; and at the same time its capacity for work is destroyed! When drink was allowed to be sold in the Compounds of Johannesburg, the Mine Managers soon found that a third of their Black workers were constantly in a state of intoxication and unfit to go down into the mine. So the sale was happily stopped, not so much for moral as for purely practical reasons!

So, if the question is seriously studied, one is forced to come to the conclusion that total prohibition of European liquor, and of any similar product, is the only chance of salvation for the Natives. I know of only two classes of people who would contravene this conclusion: the liquor traders, — but their judgment is not disinterested, — and some educated Natives, and negrophiles, who resent any colour legislation and think such prohibition is an insult to the Black race. To the former, there is no need to reply. Let them only consider the heavy responsibility they incur in enriching themselves by slowly killing a primitive, childish race which has not enough moral force to resist the danger! To the second I would say: "Even if some of you have truly reached that moral status where you can use and not abuse, you must confess that your race, as a whole, has not yet attained to it. A great number of the best Native Christians have fallen deplorably and been lost owing to the passion for drink; how much more defenceless are the rank and file, raw heathen or weak Christians! Accept the testimony of facts and recognize that the Black race, just emerging from savagery, is still in a state of infancy morally speaking and must be treated with great care. Later on, let us hope, the time will come when it will have grown in strength and moral vigour and no legal restriction will be any longer necessary.

As regards *Native drinks*, the use of *byala*, strong beer, is generally prohibited in Christian Congregations. Some Missions also exclude light beer, *buputju*, whilst some (amongst them the Swiss Romande Mission) allow it. *Buputju* proper, the Suto *leting*, is not very objectionable, containing but little alcohol; but I have already pointed out the great difficulty of establishing a clear line of demarcation between buputju and byala. Our experience is that Native Christians readily approve the prohibition of byala... but, after a while, they begin to brew a buputju which is almost the equivalent of it, and the morality of their congregations sinks in proportion to the increase of alcohol in

their drink. So, in a Synod held in Shiluvane in 1908, the question was earnestly discussed during a whole day. These were the confessions made by the delegates "We have deceived our leaders ! What we drink is byala, and not buputju ! We are drinking ourselves, the elders, and leading the others into temptation ; thus we give strength to the beer. The beer is the hyena. It kills the soul! It kills the work of salvation ! Let it die once for all, the wild beast. Let a knife be provided to cut the throat of the wild beast ", viz., let strict regulations be adopted to prevent drunkenness in the Church.

When Natives arrive at such a conviction of the danger of alcohol for their race, and take up such a position in regard to their own beer, should not we, White people, be greatly to blame if we increased their difficulties by providing them with European drinks which are ten times more dangerous for them !

E. LIVE STOCK BREEDING.

I. *Oxen.*

Oxen were plentiful in Thongaland before the Zulu invasion. The Ba-Ngoni warriors stole and killed them wholesale ; they have never been so numerous since then and to-day they are fewer than ever, owing to cattle plague and to Texas Fever which has destroyed the herds in the Transvaal and in the greater part of the Lourenço Marques district. Oxen are not the property of chiefs only. Any *numzane* can possess a kraal, *ranga* dji-ma (Ro.), *shibaya* (Dj), where he keeps not only his own cattle but those entrusted to his care. Having plenty of boys to herd them, he readily accepts the cows which his neighbours ask him to look after, all the more so as the milk will be his, and he will be given one of the calves, according to custom (I. p. 413). Much care is taken of the welfare of the cattle : the herding-boys are expected to lead them to pasture in the morning, when the dew is still on the grass ; during the five or six winter months hardly any rain falls, but heavy morning dew replaces it, moistening the grass, and Natives firmly believe that it makes the cattle fat. So it is said that the oxen must

go out early and " eat the dew ". (Compare the tale of Piti. Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga, p. 156.) Moreover the best kinds of grass, those which are the most nourishing, are well known, and boys are sent to the places where they grow. Parts of the bush are also burnt as soon as the grass dries up, so as to obtain fresh grass as early as possible in the spring. In autumn, after the harvest, oxen are allowed to wander about in the gardens, where they eat the mealies and millet and sorghum stems, and find better grass.

The Thonga castrate most of their bulls; however they keep one or two in each herd for breeding purposes. Strange to say, these beasts are generally very tame; they are hardly any wilder than the castrated oxen. However, boys sharpen their horns and excite the bulls of different herds to fight. They pour live ants on their forehead to irritate them. They give them names; e. g. Makonyama, the one who threatens on both sides, — Mombomakhele, the one who has curly hair on the head, the terrible one, — Ntlhontlha-ba-tsha, shisa-sha-munga, the one who beats the fire... people are burnt by the sparks as by embers of the mimosa tree, — Mabala-ya-tilo, the " stripes of heaven ", — Mabata-bata, the one with many spots, etc. Many of these names are suggested by the colouring of the animals (1). I never heard songs in praise of the cattle similar to those found amongst the Ba-Suto for instance. It does not seem that oxen have at any time played such an important part in the tribal life of the Thonga as is the case amongst Zulus or Sutos.

Women, especially those of the childbearing age and having sexual relations, are not allowed to take care of oxen. It is taboo. When they require dung to smear the huts, they send little children or girls free as yet from menses or at any rate

(1) Native cattle are by no means of pure breed. There are many races which have been crossed: a small race with short horns and another with large lyre-shaped horns, probably brought from the Transvaal to the coast of Delagoa Bay. Madagascar oxen, with their strange prominence on the back, resembling zebus, have also been imported in great numbers into Lourenço Marques for butcher's purposes. Possibly some have been used for breeding.

unmarried, to fetch it in the oxen kraal. When oxen are sick, they are entrusted to the care of little girls who sometimes must stay with them as long as two months without returning home. We have already met with these feminine taboos concerning oxen, I. p. 185 and 190.

The object of oxen-breeding is not milk but the acquisition of *wealth*... as oxen mean wealth to the Native, a means of purchasing girls and of thus increasing his family. Oxen are also bred for food, the meat being highly appreciated and divided amongst all the members of the family according to the strict rules previously explained (I. p. 299). The slaughtering is done by piercing the heart with an assagai, a painful and sometimes very protracted operation. This occurs at marriage feasts, at other family and national gatherings, at the sacrifice for the rain (Part VI), and on special occasions, once a year for instance, when a headman wants to feast his people. All, even neighbours who are not relatives, and travellers are welcome to the feast. Natives have wonderful olfactory powers. They seem to smell out the *lisuna*, viz., the peculiar odour of the meat, a mile off, and when an ox has been killed you see them emerging from the bush on all sides!

As regards *milk*, it certainly plays a part in the alimentation of the villages which are fortunate enough to possess a well filled oxen kraal. The *milking* of the cows presents difficulties unknown in Europe! African cows have not yet learned to submit tamely to this operation! The calf must always be allowed to suck a few mouthfuls, then a boy pulls it away from the teat and the cow consents to be milked. Should a cow be too wild, they pass a string through its nostrils and so keep it quiet during the whole operation. The milk is generally received in a large wooden bowl. It is very seldom consumed as a liquid, but is *eaten* when thickened by coagulation. The fresh milk is poured into a calabash with an opening at the bottom closed by a cork: a certain quantity of whey has been kept in the calabash and this causes the fresh milk to curdle at once. When curdled but not yet firm, it is called *shitjubi* and is eaten with spoons by men and women. But it is left to decom-

pose : the whey *(mulaza)* soon separates from the thick part which becomes entirely solid and is then called *ntjhwamba*. The cork at the bottom of the calabash is removed, the *mulaza* flows out freely and is drunk by the men and herd boys. The *ntjhwamba* is put into a plate and each man or woman, not having her *tihweti* (I. p. 187), approaches and takes a spoonful of it. A woman during menstruation must never drink milk, nor during her confinement or until her child has been presented to the moon (I. p. 51).

The milk of the first week after a cow has calved is taboo. It must not be mixed with other cows' milk, because the umbilical cord of the calf has not yet fallen. It can, however, be boiled and consumed by children as they do not count ! After that milk is never boiled : not that there is any taboo to fear, but it is not customary. Natives do not give any clear reason for these milk taboos. They have no objection to selling their milk to strangers ; on the contrary, they are so eager to make money out of it that they often add water to it, and any European having had dealings with them in milk matters would have his story to tell !

Goat's milk is left for the herd boys ; men do not taste it.

II. *Other domestic animals.*

Besides oxen, the Ba-Ronga breed *goats* (mbuti, yin-tin), the care of which is relegated to the small boys (I. p. 61). Every one, so to speak, possesses one or more goats, whilst oxen are much more rarely met with.

Native goats are very small and frequently attacked by a disease called ndlwabane which decimates whole herds. They are not tended with enough care, although a special hut (mhala) is sometimes built to protect them from the rain.

Goats are killed by piercing the heart : this is at any rate the ritual way of killing them (I. p. 158). The officiating person stands on the right of the animal and stabs it in the left side, holding the left leg. The animal suffers acutely ; but goats are

often slaughtered by cutting the throat, not from any feelings of compassion, but in order to prevent them crying too long, as "this would surely bring many people on the spot and you would have to share the meat with them!" (Mboza).

If the ox plays an important part in the *social life*, the goat seems to be specially reserved for the sacrifices, that is to say for *religious usages*. This ritual use authorises us to suppose that, as millet seems to be the oldest cereal, the goat is the most ancient domestic animal amongst the Thonga, and, no doubt, amongst all South African Bantu.

The gall bladder, the astragalus, the half digested grass found in its intestines, strips made of its skin, all play a special part in the ceremonies and superstitious practices of the tribe previously mentioned. The gall bladder (nyongwa) is fixed in the hair of the person in whose honour the goat was slaughtered. The astragalus (nhlolo) is tied to the wrist, at the ankle or the waist as a means of protection. The *psanyi* (half digested grass) is taken from the shihlakahla stomach and is used in connection with the invocation to the gods in the sacrifices. (See Part VI, Compare also I. p. 111, 160-162).

Sheep, hamba, yin-tin, (Ro.) nyimpfu, yin-tin, (Dj.) are scarce in our tribe, and are mostly without wool. The wool sheep is called *shitlapu*. It is not taboo for subjects to possess sheep, but this animal is connected in a special manner with the chiefs. Its astragalus designates royal personages in the set of divinatory bones. It is used in the national sacrifices, those offered to the chief's ancestors at the capital. (See Part VI). Let us remind the reader that its skin is used to carry a child in case of *bovumba* (I. p. 191).

The *pig*, as previously mentioned, is a new comer in the Bantu village. Its name, *nguluve*, means the wild pig. However most villages possess one or two of them. They are never slaughtered in connection with sacrifices.

Poultry (tihuku) is the most common of all live stock. Not a village is without its fowl house (shihahlu); these are generally fashioned like a small hut and perched on piles to protect the poultry during the night from snakes. (See illustration I. p. 282).

When a hen and her brood of young chickens have to be cared for, a much smaller hut is made on the ground, but the utmost precaution is taken to keep it almost hermetically sealed, as the mhamba (a long green snake, very venomous) and the shipyahla (Echnida arietans, large viper resembling the puff-adder) do great execution amongst fowls! As cows are not bred for milking purposes, neither are chickens raised for the sake of their eggs. In fact Thonga consider it sheer waste to eat eggs and always allow the hens to hatch them out. Hens are more wild than they are with us and often make their nests in the open country, returning some fine day with a flourishing young family. The breed is of very small size and the eggs are tiny: it would require at least two to equal the weight of one ordinary egg such as are for sale in the European markets; it is therefore evidently more advantageous to hatch eggs than to eat them! If, by any chance, a hen dies on the nest from the bite of a snake, the Natives will willingly devour the half hatched or three quarters addled eggs; the more the chicken is formed, the greater the appreciation of the delicacy, for, says the Thonga, "i nyama!" — "this is meat!" Fowls are extensively used as timhamba, viz., sacrificial offerings. The throat is cut; a little of the down plucked off the neck is dipped into the blood, approached to the mouth for the perfomance of the *tsu* rite, one of the smaller feathers of the wing (shihluwa), one of the claws and the beak are tied together and fixed to the wrist, or the ankle or to the neck, of the person for the sake of whom the offering has been made. (Part VI).

Thonga assert that they have always possessed fowls. "They have made their appearance together with men" — "ti tumbulukile ni banhu", they say. But we know that the critical sense is absent from their minds, so we cannot rely on any such absolute dictum. "The Hoñwana had them" they add; and this we can believe, as the Hoñwana have still kept more or less apart from the invaders of the XVth or XVIth century (I. p. 330) and can have preserved their traditions. This shows that poultry was known in Delagoa Bay 300 or 400 years ago. Not having seen the Portuguese chronicles of 1550-1600, I cannot

say whether they make any allusion to the presence of fowls at that date (1).

F. HUNTING AND FISHING.

Whatever may be the antiquity of cattle breeding amongst South African Natives, there has been a time when they had no domestic animals at all. Then, however, there were plenty of antelopes, elephants, hippopotami in the country and they satisfied their craving for meat by hunting. Hunting was undoubtedly more developed in those remote times than now, and it was accompanied with customs and rites which are still to be found in some places, though rapidly disappearing, and in which are embodied some of the most curious animistic ideas of the tribe.

I. *Big Game Hunting.*

Big game is plentiful in Thonga territory, of course more so in the remote places (mananga) than in the populated areas. Elephants are still found in the desert, in Hlengweland and Maputju; hippopotami swarm in the Nkomati and Limpopo; antelopes of subtropical Africa still abound North of Khosen and in the low plains of Zoutpansberg: the sable antelope, (mhalamhala), water buck (mhetlwa), koedoe, gnu (hongonyi), red buck (nhlangu), etc. The duyker (mhunti) is met with everywhere. The smaller antelopes are the shipeya, mangulwe, etc. The giraffe (nhutlwa) and the buffalo (nyari) are still found North of Khosen, but are decreasing in number (2).

The most ancient way of killing game was the *marindji trap*, viz., a large hole dug in the earth covered with branches and full of pointed poles upon which the animal fell and impaled itself.

(1) As regards Pedi-Suto of Zoutpansberg, the introduction of fowls amongst them is quite modern and they admit that they owe them to the Malemba who brought them into the country about 150 years ago. See my paper in "Folklore" Sept. 1908.

(2) See Part VI, Chap. I for the scientific names of the animals which are alluded to in this paragraph.

This was already known to the Hoñwana, three or four centuries ago, before they possessed any iron weapon. They used to kill elephants in that way and, being unable to dismember them, they made a fire all round the beast to cook it on the spot!

In order "to make the game forget", viz., to circumvent its wariness (djibata), certain magical charms are used in connection with the trap. The fence which surrounds it is smeared over with a powder made from a human placenta. A hunter's wife carefully preserves the afterbirth of her children; she bakes it on the evening of the day of delivery, hides it during the following day, dries it the next evening, puts it between two pieces of a broken pot, and hangs it to the roof. When the father returns from his hunting trip, he makes a powder of it, mixes it with other drugs, and uses it to smear the fence of the trap, also his arrows, or his gun. Should an antelope be wounded by a projectile covered with this drug, it is sure to fall at once! This powerful medicine is called *ndzedzena* and it is deemed so important that a hunter's wife who loses the afterbirth must pay a fine of one hoe: the hunter will try to obtain the placenta of another woman: so it is not necessary that the afterbirth be that of his own wife (Viguet).

The marindji traps are rarely met with in Thongaland; they are still used in the South of Maputju country, and in the Hlengwe territory. I never came across any myself. Generally Natives use *iron traps* which they buy in the European stores, some of which are quite sufficiently strong to catch a duyker or a wild pig. They smear them with another charm, the *buriba*, a kind of brownish moss growing on the roots of a tree called shivumbunkanye. It also is said to have the power of "making the game forget".

I have described some other traps when dealing with boys' games.

But the great means of securing game are the hunting trips undertaken by the men who are *regular hunters*. Any one can be an ordinary hunter (muhloti, mu-ba), but there are men who are called *phisa* (dji-ma). It seems that certain individuals particularly deserve this title, having made of hunting a kind

of trade. I do not know of any special ceremony of initiation being necessary in order to become a regular hunter. However, as we shall see, the phisa form a class by themselves, having their own medicines and their special way of living. They sometimes live in particular villages, especially the hunters of hippopotami, and partake more or less of the nature of magicians. One of them was Mubandane, a relation of Mboza who lived in Nondwana. As is customary with many Natives of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, he was hunting elephants for a Portuguese trader, named Fonseca, who provided him with guns and powder. When ready to undertake his *hunting trip* to the North of Gazaland (Mosapa), he had to undergo a purification (hlambo). His medicine-man cooked a pot full of his drugs, washed him with the froth and poured the contents of the pot on the roof, over the entrance of the hunter's hut. Mubandane had then to stoop and enter his hut, the water leaking through the grass and falling on his shoulders. These words were pronounced by the medicine-man, during this ritual entry into the hut: "Go and be happy! Though the rain fall on you, though the dew make you wet, when you sleep, you will be everywhere as in a hut; everywhere it will be like home (kaya). You will have taken your hut with you, you will enter it in a wet state!" This ceremony of purification is a protection against the dangers of the bush. After having undergone it, the hunters start with their rattles and singing special songs, the hunters' songs (Part V). The sacrifice of a fowl is sometimes made before starting. It is taboo for adults to eat the meat of that fowl: this might compromise the success of the expedition. Let little children eat it: they are quiet (viz., they have no sexual relations), and so the hunting will not be spoilt.

Hunters carry their charms with them, especially their *ndjao*, the root of a certain juncus, which enable them to overcome the dangers of the bush. They also inoculate their wrists with the mysterious *tintjebe* powder (I. p. 451).

During his expedition the *phisa* is subject to special taboos. Firstly to those applying to travellers in general, especially the

salt taboo. (See later on). Should he take salt with him, this would "precede him" — "rangela", and he would kill no game. It will be soon enough to look for salt after having killed! Moreover he must not have sexual relations with any woman, be it his own wife or other women. "We have seen it", says Mboza, "many hunters who had transgressed that law were killed by the wild animals!" He adds: "The hunter must forget everything about home. Were he to have relations with women, his charms would get heated, whilst they must remain cool (titimeta). Himself he must become a man of the bush (wa nhoba), similar to the animals which are found there. In this way, they will not fear him, nor will he fear them. If he sees a lion devouring an antelope, he will dare to approach it, kneel before it, clasp his hands and say: 'You, lion! give me some meat, that I may eat; I am hungry!' The lion slowly goes away and leaves the antelope to him!" So the maphisa kill game, cut the meat into strips which they take home. When returning they stop at the great entrance of the village, shouting their "mikulungwane", and camp outside. The headman comes to them, greets them and offers a hen in sacrifice on their behalf, to thank his gods for having saved them from death. Should the *phisa* have stayed very long away from home, he may find that his wives have had children by other men during his absence. But this does not matter, as his wives are not subject to the same law of continence as he is during his long trip.

Let us now see what rules are enforced when big game has been successfully killed.

The *eland* is a splendid beast, highly coveted but dangerous to kill. Hear Viguet: "It possesses the *nuru*. When you kill it, it is taboo to walk round its body. Go straight to its head, and there, in the hair of the forehead, you will find a louse; take it. Then dig the earth where the head has fallen: you will find a root there; cut it and bring it home together with the louse. You are safe! Having reached home, you ask the medicine-man to prepare a charm with the root and the louse: he will *lurulula* you, viz., free you from the *nuru*. Should you

omit this treatment you may lose your head, be unable to find the way home or, when you are back, you may forget everything about your hunting trip. People will say to you: 'U ni nyanyunyu', — 'you are cracked'; you act as if you had killed an eland and had not been *lurulula*, delivered from its nuru!" — Another rule in connection with the eland is this; should one of these animals have been killed whilst you were bringing your wife home, you must cut off a piece of its skin and make a bracelet of it, which you tie round your wrist. Then you can eat your meal with your wife. To-morrow go with her to an ant-hill and fix this piece of skin to it with two wooden pegs, one on either side. In the middle between the two pegs, set fire to the skin by means of a burning brand. You are then saved. You have *lurulula* yourselves. If you do not take that precaution, your child will be miserable: it will dry up, viz., be so thin that all his tendons will become visible. — Never let your children eat eland's meat, before they have been inoculated with a preventative drug! Everything connected with that beast is dangerous: when you follow its tracks, if you see that it is tired and that saliva has fallen from its mouth, take care not to tread on it. It is taboo: you will be seized by an invincible sleep. The reason of these dangers is that the eland has a pouch of fat round its heart called *bufu* (same root as mhofu, yin-tin, name of the eland). This fat is something very remarkable! Hence all these rules! On the other hand, should an eland be found dead, transfixed, no nuru need be feared.

We have already met with the *ndakazi antelope* taboos. This ndakazi, or shidyanaman, must not be killed intentionally amongst the Nkuna (I. p. 339) lest the hunter and his whole family should shortly die. We have seen how the danger can be avoided where the antelope has been unintentionally killed. Shouting: "Alack! my mother! with whom shall I eat it?" can overcome the *nuru*. Clever hunters know a second way of attaining the same end; it is to dig the soil near its nose (the same way as for the eland) and cut the root you find there: "This root has received the nuru (or the spirit, breath) of the

animal. When you have finished cutting off the limbs of the antelope, you arrange the dung (psanyi) found in the bowels, handling it with this root. In former times hunters used to throw its limbs on all sides: this would "spread (hangalasa) the nuru" (Mankhelu). Amongst the Hlabi, the ndakazi is called *hingakaya*, viz., closing the way home. It is not taboo to kill it, but the hunter must cry, when throwing the assagai: "Kaya! Mawako!" — "May I return home!" If the antelope is swifter than the man and runs away (with a sound like kha!) the hunter will be lost in the bush: the animal will have *hinga kaya* viz., closed the way home. It will be necessary to *lurulula* the hunter, whether he has killed the antelope or not.

Some other animals also possess the wonderful *nuru*, especially the elephant, the duyker antelope and the hippopotamus. Let us see how the lurulula is performed in these three cases.

In former times the lurulula was practised in the following way as regards the *elephant*: the hunter used to take a little of the tintjebe powder (the charm of the slayers), pierce the eye of the beast, mix the powder with the vitreous humour, add drugs prepared with the end of the trunk and of the tail, and this was used to overcome the nuru. Nowadays elephants are killed with guns, and no lurulula is deemed necessary any more (Viguet).

As for *duykers* the operation consists in blowing chewed ndjao (root of juncus) over it; you blow pieces of the root over the head, the forehead, the anus, and the sides of the body. Should the hunter have killed the antelope after a long pursuit, the dog who started the chase must also be lurulula. The hunter cuts off one of the hoofs of the duyker, makes a notch in the cleft of the hoof and blows the ndjao into it: then he buries the hoof, calls the dog and shows it the place where it has been buried. The dog will then scratch, find the hoof and run away with it. This lurulula will help both the hunter and the dog to become greater adepts in hunting, the dog learning to follow the trail and the hunter identifying himself so much with bush life and bush animals that these will not be afraid of him and he will be able to approach them.

I owe to Mboza the graphic description of the rules of *hippopotamus* hunting. There are a few villages, near the Nkomati or other rivers, whose inhabitants are regular hippopotamus hunters, and possess the special science, or art, called *butimba ;* the hunters themselves are called *batimba*. This science is hereditary : it is taught by the father to his sons. These men possess a peculiar drug, the *mbangulwa*, by which, when the hunter is inoculated, he acquires a special power over the hippopotami : should he wound one of them, the beast will not be able to go very far, and it will be possible to follow it and soon to find it. But these inoculations make that man very dangerous for his fellow men : should he beat any one, that person will be at once seized by a disease which will prevent him passing water or evacuating stools.

This is the manner in which these batimba hunt. During the day, the hunter fishes, watching the movements of the hippopotami all the time. When he sees that the propitious season has come and when he is ready to undertake a hunting expedition of one month, he first calls his own daughter to his hut and has sexual relations with her. This incestuous act, which is strongly taboo in ordinary life, has made of him a " murderer " : he has killed something at home ; he has acquired the courage for doing great deeds on the river ! Henceforth he will have no sexual relations with his wives during the whole campaign. On the same night, immediately after the act, he starts with his sons ; they close the drift where the beasts leave the river by putting a canoe across the track. The hippopotami are in the neighbouring forest, busy pasturing, and perhaps ravaging fields. When they return to the river, they stop in front of the canoe which obstructs their retreat : then a first assagai is thrown at them. It has been smeared over with Strophantus powder (ntjulu) (1) which is a great poison. The animal rushes to the water ; when it reappears on the other side, it is pierced by a second assagai. These assagais are arranged in such a way that the blade is

(1) The ntjulu, Strophantus petersianus, is a shrub with drooping branches which grows abundantly in the Morakwen forest.

not firmly fixed to the handle ; moreover a long string is twined round the handle connecting the blade with it. So, when the hippopotamus enters the river, the assagai which is planted in its skin, separates from the handle which remains floating and acts as a buoy, the string unwinding and the handle following the animal in its retreat, showing in what direction it has gone.

As soon as the assagai is thrown, the hunter runs to his village to inform his wife. The woman must at once shut herself up in the hut and remain perfectly quiet. She must neither eat nor drink, nor crush her mealies : this would induce the hippopotamus to fight, and might cause the death of her husband, whilst, if she keeps quiet (rula), the beast also will be quiet. Then all the hunters of the village are called, they enter the canoe and follow the beast. To facilitate the pursuit, they replace the floating handle of the assagai by a *male*, viz., the big nervule of the leaf of the mimale palm tree, similar to a board of 30 feet in length. As soon as this kind of pole is fixed, somebody informs the woman at home that she can come out of the hut. But let her be prudent, as victory is not yet won. The hippopotamus will come to the surface to breathe : an assagai will be thrown into his nostrils, a second one later on, and it will be no longer able to close its nose when plunging : so it will be drowned. But it may attack the hunters furiously, led by spirits of baloyi (wizards) which are riding on it " just as men on a horse " ! The fight will perhaps last long !

When the hippopotamus has been dragged on to the sand of the bank, the principal hunter proceeds to the lurulula. The beast is laid on its back, its legs pulled on both sides, so as to separate them from each other, and the hero introduces himself between them, from behind, and creeps along the belly and the chest as far as the teeth. Then he goes away. The object of the lurulula is this: " By this operation the hunter takes on himself the defilement of the animal (its smell, its nature ?) so that the other hippopotami, when seing him, do not notice him ; they mistake him for one of themselves and this man will have great courage and not run away when they come to him, urged

on by the baloyi who have enslaved them and who are like flames of fire on their backs! " (Mboza).

The information concerning the hippopotamus and the duyker comes from a Ronga of the Coast, that regarding the eland and the ndakazi from Mankhelu and Viguet, belonging to the Northern clans. It seems as if there were a difference of ideas between these different parts of the tribe. The primitive conception seems to me to be that of the Northern clans. Some animals possess a vital principle, a kind of spiritual entity, which escapes from their body after they have been pierced and causes danger to the hunter who killed them, just as the nuru of the slain persecutes their slayers (I. p. 453). Hence these strange protective rites of lurulula, a word which evidently derivates from the root *luru* (which becomes *n*uru by the addition of the prefix *mu.* of the mu-mi class, see my Thonga-Shangaan Grammar § 35). Lurulula is a doubly reversive derivate (Grammar § 208) which means precisely to take away, to wash away. The aim of the rite is to free the hunters from the vengeance of the slain animal. For the Ronga, the lurulula seems to be, rather, a means of identification of the hunter with the animal world, so that he will be able to live in its midst without being noticed. This might be a first development of the primitive notion. This notion seems to have undergone a further alteration in the explanation just given with regard to the hippopotamus: the object of the lurulula is no longer to protect against the nuru itself, viz., the vital principle of the animal, its " double " which remains living after its death, but to quiet (rulisa) the other hippopotami, and to overcome the baloyi spirits, viz., wizards who enslave beasts and use them as mounts for their criminal nightly expeditions. I could not say whether this is a confusion of two animistic notions, or an evolution in the superstition.

The lurulula is the great hunter's rite. There is a second to be performed before they can enjoy the flesh of their victim, the *luma*. The luma is the removal of a food taboo by a rite which must accompany the first mouthful taken. It is obligatory for the first fruits, for the food left by a deceased person, etc. (I. p. 146, 366.) This precaution is also necessary in the case of game. The hunter who transfixed the hippopotamus is the first to luma. He takes the diaphragm of the animal (map-

falo, same word which also designates the conscience, the internal troubles of the mind), and puts a piece of it into his mouth then he plunges into the river, and eats this meat while under the water, " as if he were a fish ". Having accomplished the feat, he emerges triumphant. His sons and the inmates of his village, *luma* after him. They take a portion of the flesh of the neck, called shipelo, from the place where the hippopotamus pushes the mud in front of it, and which is supposed to be the seat of its strength. This they mix with the mbangulwa medicine and, standing in a line, they all eat a little of it, men, women, and children. All the neighbours assemble : they have smelled out the meat ! The portion for the chief is put aside (I. p. 378), as the hippopotamus is very heavily taxed, and must even be cut open by the men of the capital. Then every one receives a piece of the flesh, and luma, either by smearing the sole of the foot with it, or by taking a small live ember and mixing it with the meat. The object of the luma rite is to remove the danger of eating meat to which you are not accustomed : it might " hate you (benga) " and cause colics. The taboo is not very strict, as there is only danger of colics and not of death. Luma is necessary for elephants, when eating the meat for the first time, but not for lions or panthers. For elephants it is performed by smearing the soles of the feet with the meat.

Another custom of Bantu hunters is the *thokoza* or *shimemo*. It consists in this : when a big animal has been killed, the hunter gives a loud shout. It is a call addressed by him to his fellow clansmen to come and help him to master the beast, of which they will partake. This is also intended to exclude men of other clans, and to prevent fighting or any dispute about the possession of the animal. The cry therefore differs in each clan. For the Ba-Nkuna, it is : *Nyandlaleyo*. For the Tsungu : *Hi nhlanga !* For the Manukosi people : *Muyamba ngwenya ya nambu wa tingwenya !* — Crocodile of the river of cro-

Buffalo hunter with his victim.

codiles ! For the Mavundja : *Kahlamba ntjhaba yo nonoha !* — the big mountain, difficult to climb ! (1)

II. *Psinyama-nyamana. Small meats.*

This word which comes from the well-known Bantu word nyama, meat, is a triple diminutive, obtained by the reduplication of the stem, the prefix *psi*, and the suffix *ana* ! It means all kinds of lesser meats, viz., of animals of small size, of which Thonga are very fond.

Anything in any way resembling meat is welcome to them. Amongst Mammalia they specially enjoy certain kinds of rodents, not the domestic rats, but field mice called maphephe and mabuti which boys catch in their traps. Civet cats (nsimba, yi-tin) and wild cats (goya, dji-ma) are not frequently seen near the villages.

As regards birds, they eat them all with the few exceptions which I will shortly mention, from the tiniest sparrow to ducks and Guinea fowls which they manage to snare. They have no aversion to the lower animals : they gather the *matomane*, large caterpillars belonging to a species of Saturnidae called Urota Sinope, which are found in families on the nkanye tree, during October. By exercising a gentle pressure on the hideous creatures, the inwards are squeezed out, and the rest is thrown into a saucepan and boiled, making a nameless broth of a blackish colour. To see it is quite sufficient... and they enjoy it ! Several other kinds of Saturnidae also figure at their feasts : the matomane of nyamari (Anthoaera caffraria), others of a brick red colour (A. menippe), those of the nhlangula shrub (A. Zambezina), etc. When the cooks go out to split the trunks of old half decayed nkanye trees, whence they get their kindlings,

(1) The Pedi have the same custom. The Bakhaha cry : " Haratsha ! Mugoni ! We " ! This expression comes from the verb *ratsha*, to cross a river on a tree trunk, as the Khaha clan is said to have been arrested by a swollen river in its ancient migrations and to have *ratsha* it successfully. The remembrance of this feat of their ancestors has remained and has given rise to this rallying cry. Other Pedi say : " *Sivandja khomo* ", viz., " the killer will be given an ox for his reward. "

they are most careful to put on one side the big white larvae of two large Cerambycidae coleoptera (Mallodon Downesii and Plocoederus frenatus, etc.) These enormous white worms (shipungu) will be fried in their own fat, and served up as a titbit for these ladies on their return to the village.

The insect world does great harm to the gardens through the agency of its winged members, the *locusts*, and Natives avenge themselves by eating them wholesale. When a swarm of these destructive creatures has alighted somewhere in the evening, and is benumbed by the cool air of the night, the villagers go and collect them in bags or baskets in great quantities. The heads, the wings and the legs are torn off and the bodies roasted on the embers, or boiled and used as seasoning. When plentiful, the locusts are dried and crushed in mortars to make a very much appreciated flour. To our taste, locusts are essentially nauseating.

Another treat, the secret of which the Nkuna learnt from their Pedi neighbours, is provided by *the males of white ants*. At Christmas time, these insects come out by thousands from the ant-hills of that region. Some are of small size : the boys introduce grasses, smeared with glue, into the holes from which these insects emerge and catch plenty of them by this kind of fishing. They eat the head, which can be heard cracking between their teeth, and throw the bodies into a calabash to season the evening meal. But there is a larger kind which is even more appreciated. The body is whitish, as large as an almond. A hole in the ant-hill, three feet wide by two feet deep, is dug at the place where the insects are most likely to come out. An old pot is placed in the clay of the ant-hill at the bottom of this hole. The hole itself is covered with green branches. These curious male termites, as soon as they have emerged from their retreat, try to fly ; but they soon fall to the ground and you see them running towards each other and shedding their slender transparent wings, so that they remain on the spot, like worms, creeping slowly along, unable to defend themselves, an easy prey for the birds and the *shinana* toads, which have a grand feast on the happy day when male termites appear ! Those which

happen to emerge where the hole has been dug, try to escape by flying, but are prevented from so doing by the covering of leaves. They at once fall heavily to the bottom and roll into the pot which may become quite full in a few hours. The owner of the trap then comes and makes a splendid sauce with its contents! This kind of termite is not met with on the Coast.

I cannot enter into the details of all these more or less doubtful meats. (See I, p. 65, the mention of the Shitambela beetle).

Although the caterpillars, coleoptera, larvae, and locusts are universally appreciated, there are other "meats" which appeal to certain individuals or clans, but are disdainfully eschewed by others. For instance the boa is eaten with great gusto by the Ronga and disliked by the Nkuna. The same with the big varan lizard. The tortoise is generally eaten, but the Mpfumu boys, who esteem themselves more civilised, reject it. Inquiring why some persons or some clans exclude certain kinds of meats which other people or clans consider delectable, we find that there are two different reasons for it which it is important to differentiate: The exclusion is due either to a *nyenya*, viz., a disgust, or to a *yila*, viz., a taboo.

1) Owing to *disgust*, some people refuse to eat *pork*: "their hearts fear it", probably because pigs are modern and some people are not yet accustomed to eat their flesh. Zulus reject every kind of fish (nhlampfi) from the same feeling of disgust. Snails are despised by all the Thonga; it is true that the snail of the country is not very tempting, its shell being of a transparent green and its flesh reddish; moreover it is said to "singita", viz., to bring bad luck to any one meeting with it on the way.

But the flesh of some other animals is abstained from, even dreaded, because they *yila*, they are taboo. Thonga have no totems, and do not exclude certain meats from their diet on account of totemic fears. But they proclaim as taboo some animals: amongst them four kinds of birds, the hawk, the vulture, the crow and the stork, because they are used by magicians to prepare powerful charms; the toad, because when teased its "urine" (murundju) oozes out and is dangerous, causing itch, as it is generally believed; a kind of Tenebrionida beetle (Psammodes

Bertoloni), called *shifufunu sha baribarr*, because it beats the ground with its abdomen making a noise represented by the word *baribarr*. I could not discover the particular danger that Natives fear in connection with this beetle, but there must be one: hence the yila. We have already met with the special feminine taboos as regards food (I. p. 184). Women abstain from certain animals, or parts of animals, fearing a bad effect on parturition. Amongst the Nkuna, women are also afraid of the meat of the panther, the civet-cat, of any animal with paws (psa marubo); they only eat animals which have hoofs (psa masondjo). " The former are wild beasts, things of the hubo, with a bad smell, meat for the men " (Mankhelu).

The comparison of *nyenya* and *yila* is interesting, as it may help to explain the origin of certain taboos, which is a very important subject indeed. The nyenya is the feeling of disgust which induces a person to abstain from a given food; in the yila there is, in addition, the dread of a supposed danger connected with the consumption of this food. Thus there is a great difference between the two : the idea of danger does not exist in the nyenya. However it is quite possible that that, which was merely a nyenya, has evolved, in the course of time, into a real yila or taboo, when the disgust is no longer the mere individual repulsion for a distasteful food, but has become a social matter, a characteristic custom of a clan, or of a group.

Let me quote two instances which came under my personal notice. Amongst my servants was a young man belonging to the Ngoni clan. The Ba-Ngoni, being of Zulu origin, do not eat fish. Sometimes the cook put shrimps into the ground nut sauce : this was a treat for all the boys, as they are very fond of shrimps and the addition greatly improved the flavour of the dish. But our Ngoni boy, having smelt the " lisuna ", used to inquire about the sauce, and if he heard that there were shrimps in it he disdainfully refused to take his share. — " We are Ba-Ngoni! We do not eat fish ", said he with disgust. Firstly, shrimps are not fish; he was " plus royaliste que le roi " ! Secondly, he did not abstain from the sauce because it had a bad flavour : it was more tasty than ever! But the *social idea* dictated his attitude! He boasted of belonging to a superior race! He was not like these wretched Ba-Thonga who eat fish! It would be lowering himself to partake of such a meal, so he preferred to fast!

I witnessed the same scene when we were distributing cakes to our school children in Lourenço Marques. One of the girls was the daughter of a pure Ronga woman, and of an Indian Mussulman. She inquired if the cakes had been cooked with lard. The cakes were excellent, and she found them so, nevertheless she refused to eat if they contained any lard, because her father was not allowed to eat pork. It is evident that from this clan repulsion, which is still a nyenya, to a distinct taboo, there is but one step. Let the boy or the girl *fear* that some evil will happen to them, because they have transgressed a sacred rule, and the nyenya will have become a yila. Let it be admitted by them that the transgression of the rule may bring death to the family or to the clan, the primitive individual feeling of disgust will be transformed into the most severe totemic taboo. I have no instance to quote in order to prove this evolution, as we have no knowledge of the past history of the taboos. From the psychological point of view, however, this process is quite within the range of possibilities.

III. *Fishing.*

There are no particular restrictions so long as fishing is carried on by *hooks*. Any one can go with his boat on the river, the lake, or the sea, and throw his line into the water. The fisherman will then say : " Thu ! (not the sacramental tsu, but only an onomatopœia describing the fall of the hook into the water). You ! my hook ! they eat to their heart's content, people who dwell yonder, where they pound their mealies kneeling down (bugimamusi), there where the khwekhwe and the mhulu are, etc. (names of different kinds of fish)." Afterwards the fisher throws a pinch of tobacco on the spot where his hook fell, not as an offering to the gods, but in order to help his hook to see (hanyanyisa), to awaken it and " give it eyes to catch." This sentence referring to the place " where people pound their mealies standing, or kneeling down ", is an allusion to a curious cosmographic notion, which we shall explain later on (Part VI. Chapt. I). Seeing the sky reflected in the water, the fisherman thinks of the ends of the earth, where heaven rests on the ground, and where women are obliged to kneel

down when crushing their mealies, lest their pestles hit the sky !

There are three other principal methods of fishing, and, as they are more or less of a collective nature, they are regulated by laws and attended with taboos : the nhangu, the shibaba and the tjeba.

The *nhangu* is a triangular enclosure made of sticks planted in the sand on the seashore. This enclosure has an opening looking seaward. The tide covers the nhangu, bringing with it all kinds of sea denizens, big lobsters, shrimps of all sizes, fish, etc ; when it retires, all these things are imprisoned in the nhangu, and try to find their way out through the opening : but this is closed and the fishers collect their catch which is sometimes considerable. A man who wants to build a nhangu must pay a tax to the chief of the country. Moreover, on the day of inauguration, (khangula), all the inhabitants have the right of coming and partaking of the result of the first fishing. This is a *luma*, the luma of the nhangu. The owner of the trap is not allowed to take a single fish home that day. Everything must be consumed on the spot.

The *shibaba* is another kind of trap, made of woven reeds, which is placed along the banks of a river, of the Nkomati, for instance, near the sea, where the tide reaches ; when the tide is low, the fish is imprisoned between the reeds and the bank. The construction of this trap is governed by strict laws : no sexual relation is allowed during the five or six weeks of the fishing. The owner of the shibaba must cut the first reed. Women must not approach the spot. On the day of inauguration there is also a luma ceremony similar to that for the nhangu.

But the most curious fishing custom is the *tjeba*. "Ku tjeba" means to kill fish in company in lakes which are drying up. At the end of the winter most of the small lakes, scattered all over Thongaland, diminish on account of the drought, and the fish they contain, consisting mostly of carp and barbel, are obliged to congregate in much smaller spaces. Natives take advantage of this and the whole country side is summoned to go and tjeba, on a certain day, as it is important to be as numerous

as possible in order ensure success. The Chief orders all his men to make the *shiranga*, a kind of conical basket, one foot and half high, whose upper end is open and wide enough to admit the hand. The shiranga must be very strong and the tree used for the purpose is called ntjangari. When the shiranga are ready, a messenger is sent to all the villages, crying :

Kho ! Khoooo ! Hobe ! Hobeee ! U yala nsateeee ! Na nsati a randja nyamooo ! A randja mihlubeee ! Kho ! Hobe !
You hate your wife ! Your wife also is fond of meat ! She is fond of the meat of the tail of fishes !

Every male member of the tribe must answer to this summons by going to the shore. Should he refuse the call, he is blamed and despised, and his companions will sing to him a mocking song :

U yala ku tjeba, nyañwako !
You refuse to fish, nyañwako. (1)

In the evening his wife will scold him, seeing that he does not bring any fish home ! She will punish him by giving him mealie pap without any sauce !

Before the throng enters the lake, someone must *make an offering* ; it must be a descendant of the inhabitants of the country, not necessarily a member of the reigning family. He does not perform the full sacramental *tsu* ; he merely spits without having put anything into his mouth, and says : " Let fish abound ! Let them not hide in the mud ! Let there be enough of them to satisfy every one. " Then all the men, quite nude, throw themselves into the lake, which is only one or two feet deep ; they put their shiranga into the water and hold it firmly on the bottom : a fish has perhaps been imprisoned ; it is heard flapping about inside the basket. The fortunate fisher catches it through the opening ; he carries a wooden pin to which a string is attached. This string is called by the technical name of *ntjungwa*. He passes the pin through the gills of the fish and ties it on his

(1) Nyañwako is a formula of insult.

string. Then he goes on. All his companions do the same. The frightened fish scatter in all directions : but on all sides the shiranga fall over them, and the men have soon made a good haul. When they have reached the extremity of the lake, they come back shouting, the following words : " Phindu-naye ! " - " Come back, following them ! " They are allowed to come out of the water and rest in the rays of the sun when tired. The more pertinacious, however, remain in as long as

The tjeba fishing. *Phot. A. Borel.*

they like. When the fishing is finished, they all sit down and compare their catches. Perhaps an enormous barbel has been caught, " the king of the lake ", as these fish sometimes attain a very large size. " Woo ! a dle ñwa kwe ! " — " Oh ! he has killed his mother ", say the men, making fun of the fortunate fisherman ! But the Chief sends an induna who levies the tax. Each fisherman unties one fish from his string and gives it to him.

The tjeba fishing is practised all over Thongaland, in Ronga territory where such ponds are numerous in the sandy hollows, amongst the Hlabi, and in the neighbourhood of rivers where there are lagoons which dry up, as far as the Maluleke country.

Should there be crocodiles in the pond, a case which might very well happen, when the lake is connected with the Limpopo or the Nkomati, the religious act is more important on account of the danger incurred. Then the bones are thrown and designate who must make the offering in order to secure adequate protection from the gods. The officiator enters the lake first, and, plunging his shiranga into the water, he says : "If you are here, crocodile, go away ! you hyena, do not bite". Amongst the Maluleke, it is a man of the Ba-Nyai tribe who must perform the religious act, as the Ba-Nyai were in the country before the Thonga. He must go first and catch a fish, bring it out alive, and offer it to his gods, surrounded by his Ba-Nyai fellows. Then he throws it back into the water. The Thonga chief then, having ordered his men to keep silence, makes the following proclamation in a loud voice : "Let the fish abound, and kill them all, but do not bewitch each other !"

The Hlengwe have a very curious custom when they *tjeba*. They take a little boy and a little girl, lay them down together under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, during all the time they are fishing. The children keep quiet, — so the fish will also keep quiet and not swim away. When the fishing is concluded, these children are "awakened", and are given a part of the catch : they are praised and thanked as they are supposed to have secured the fish by their action... or rather by their inaction ! This very significative rite might explain why sexual relations are prohibited during all the important hunting and fishing operations : with the animistic conception of Natives, Bantu do not separate the domain of man from the animal world ; human actions have their immediate repercussion amongst animals. So if men and women keep a severe control over themselves, hippopotami, fish or elephants will not be so wild, and hunters will have more success !

* * *

Meat is either boiled (pseka), or roasted (wosha). When boiled, the broth is called *muru*, (Ro.) or *sheshebo*, (Dj.) the same

name that is given to monkey nut sauce or any other seasoning. When roasted, it is either placed on the embers, or skewered on sticks (lihanga) and exposed to the heat of the fire.

The blood of animals (bubendje) is also eaten by most men. However, many fear it (tshaba), not for a yila reason, as if it were taboo, but rather from individual loathing. There are no special laws to be observed, as regards bones. The meat of sacrifices, offered in the funeral rites, must be eaten *on the road*, not in the mortuary nor in the guests' villages, as we have already seen.

Meat is welcome, and eagerly sought after in time of famine (ndlala). Should the October rains fail, or the crops be destroyed by grasshoppers, as has been, alas, frequently the case since the first appearance of these pests in August 1894 (1), the Natives are bereft of every resource (2). They dig up all the borders of the lakes, to find the tuber of the nenuphars (Nymphea stellata), and cook these indigestible roots (matibu). They have also gone so far as to make flour of the pith of the palm trees (mimale). They disinter the bodies of dead animals, or cram themselves with *masala*, which often engenders serious sicknesses. Some eat big Copris beetles.

Such famines were frequent in former times, and special years are still known as having been years of *ndlala*. So, in the chronology of Shinangana (Part IV) the year 1875 (?) was

(1) Just at the commencement of the war between the Natives and the Portuguese, grasshoppers arrived in thick clouds in the district of Lourenço Marques They had not been seen for a great number of years: old folk only recollected having seen them in bygone times. Since then the scourge has never entirely disappeared. The coincidence of their coming and the beginning of hostilities struck the Blacks very forcibly; they often said, at the sight of the grasshoppers: " They announce the armies of Gungunyane. »

(2) Here is a pretty couplet with reference to famine :

Nkondjo wa nhlengana shipopokwana ?

— Lembe ra ndlala a he ngume kusuhe !

The traces of the little antelope (nhlengana) (which one sees in the desert a long way from its lair) recall the year of famine, when one does not stay near home; (one must go a long way to search food). See also the several allusions to the year of famine in Les Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga, pages 158, 160 and the following.

called "the year of the Magadingele famine". On the Coast the Goñhwen famine is still remembered (1). The proximity of a seaport easily provisioned, and the possibility of earning money wherewith to buy rice and maize constitute a real advantage, which they are the first to recognise. In this respect civilisation has rendered signal service to the Thonga commissariat !

(1) It does not appear that starvation ever induced Thonga to practise cannibalism on any considerable scale. Cases are known when this happened: as when, during the war of 1895, a Ronga killed a man and ate his lungs and kidneys quite raw. He was prosecuted and deported to Mozambique. In the mountains Ba-Pedi and Ba-Suto began to consume human flesh after the raids of Chaka and his generals. They first ate the corpses ; then, having acquired a taste for that food, they began to attack travellers, springing out from the caves in the mountains, where they were hiding ; they even made organised expeditions in search of men to devour. These cannibals are known under the name of Makhema and caused the Queen of the Bokhaha, Male, to change her residence (I. p. 452).

CHAPTER II

Industry of the Thonga

Industry, in the human race, is born of necessity. Man feels the need of protection and shelter from wind and weather; this need leads him to make something for a covering (clothing) and to build a dwelling (habitation). The necessity of procuring food, of preparing it, of keeping it, suggests to him the idea of fashioning weapons for killing game, and utensils of various kinds for tillage, and for cooking the products of the soil.

But Nature must also provide the wherewithal to be turned to account by man's intelligence. The development of human industry depends therefore on a variety of circumstances. We will now study the inventions of the Thonga, what they have been able to evolve in the matters of clothing, habitation and utensils: we will also take into consideration their wood-carvings, and their exceedingly primitive commerce, and will endeavour to find a solution of the several questions which will naturally be suggested by the extremely slow industrial development of these tribes.

A. CLOTHING AND ORNAMENTS

I. *The Evolution of Costume.*

As regards *women*, Mboza asserts that, in remote times, Ronga women wore well tanned and softened skins, to which they hung pieces of brass, as the Pedi women actually do. For the present, amongst the Ronga, they are all clothed with pieces of material, in the rough, which they call *kapulane;* the piece

of stuff is fixed round the waist, whence falling down it forms a skirt, with which most women in the interior are satisfied. They do not cover the upper part of the body. The undergarment, on the genitalia, is called *ntlhomo* in front, (a word

Phot. P. Berthoud.

Camilla, a Lourenço Marques woman.

which is taboo), and *mphela* at the back, (this term is less taboo than the first one).

In the Transvaal, Thonga or Shangaan women have also from time immemorial adopted European materials, of which they make double pleated skirts adorned with beads, as seen in the illustration I. p. 193. This is the typical heathen costume. The Pedi

or Suto women are at once distinguishable from their Ronga sisters by the fact that they have preserved their ancient skin dress. In the environs of Lourenço Marques, a further development has taken place, as women there wear a large plaid which they knot over the breast and which hangs down behind as far as their heels, a costume by no means wanting in the picturesque. They cover their breast and shoulders with a bodice

Phot. J. Bennett.
Christian girls of the Training Institution of Lemana (Northern Transvaal).

(kimao), generally very close-fitting, especially in the sleeves. The pattern is said to have been borrowed from India. (See on opposite page the portrait of Camilla, an old resident of Lourenço Marques, wearing the costume adopted by the women in the town and suburbs.)

Regular frocks are preferred by Christian converts, and so the European fashion tends to supplant the Indian, or the heathen.

As regards *men's costume* it was little else than the traditional smile among the Ba-Ronga! It consisted, in fact, of a small article made of narrow strips of palm leaf, plaited together, and could hardly be termed "clothing". It was called *mbaya*

and it bears a great resemblance to the " libyan sheath " which is seen on the old Egyptian monuments (Note I). The last mbaya were seen in the neighbourhood of Rikatla, when the war of 1894 broke out. In the Northern clans they were still commonly used by the generation which preceded Viguet, by the Nkuna who fled before Manukosi in 1835. (See Introduction to the *Grammaire Ronga*, page 17). The Kafirs of Cape Colony were still in 1903, at this stage of dress... or rather undress, and the Pedi of the Transvaal. with their *musindu* (a mere piece of skin protecting the genitalia), are not much in advance of the mbaya stage even now. This state of affairs arose in the first place from the fact that, as yet, any sentiment of modesty had hardly been conceived. It must not be supposed, however, that morals were the more depraved for that reason; on the contrary, they were much purer, and innocency far more general, judging from the reports of those who remember those days.

But a second fact which allowed the Thonga to go about without clothing, 'in puris naturalibus' or nearly so, is the warmth of the climate ; the temperature rarely drops below 44° Fahrenheit and frequently rises to 113° F., the annual mean near Lourenço Marques being about 74° F. according to our observations extending over seven years. One can thus easily dispense with a jacket in that part of the world, and it is by no means a rare occurrence to see children in the interior absolutely naked. (2)

(1) The " phallic sheath " of the earliest Egyptian statuettes which is also noticed on the engravings of the XIXth dynasty, as belonging to African populations, is not exactly of the same pattern as the Thonga mbaya or the Suto musindu. However there is a real similarity between all these primitive dresses; many of the customs of the actual Bantu seem to have existed amongst the early Egyptians and this fact shows that the origin of Egyptian civilisation is partially African.

(2) The Chopi tribe which is very industrious, dwelling in the neighbourhood of the Thonga, N.E. of the mouth of the Limpopo, has succeeded in obtaining a very superior kind of dress by beating the bark of the *mphama*, a kind of fig-tree which is wide spread in the country, and which the Ba-Chopi even planted for this purpose. The pieces of bark become very soft and can be strung together. They are called *ntjalu*. Several samples of this curious stuff can be seen in the Neuchâtel Museum. Thonga used to buy the article from their Chopi neighbours, but never knew how to manufacture it.

Zulu costume. *Phot. Natal.*

This very primitive article of attire has, however, been supplanted by one designed by the Zulus, and now worn by men from one end to the other of the Thonga tribe (except, I am told,

in some retired spots in the Hlengwe country). It consists of a belt to which are hung tails of animals, or strips of skin (djobo, dji-ma), covered with hair or fur, or even the entire skin of a civet cat, or an antelope. The nsimba skins are in great demand, but are rather expensive, and the majority of the Ba-Ronga men wear merely two pieces of ox hide (mabebe), one in front and the other behind. The small boys often content themselves with one only in front. The young men prefer to wear them rather full, something like a petticoat! The *shifado* (Vol. I. Note I) is worn with the belt of tails. This "sphaerula" is made either of carved wood or plaited milala leaves, or of a small calabash just the size required. When it is fixed in its place, raw Natives believe that they have satisfied all the exigences of decency. Although much more decent than the *mbaya*, this garment of tails, or pieces of skins, is still a trifle incomplete...

Sandals of ox hide (tintango) are also an old article of dress; they were used by hunters and travellers. They are a thing of the bush and it is taboo to bring them in the hubo (I. p. 324).

At the present time European costume is tending to supplant the belt of tails. The first step consists in adopting the *ladula*, a piece of stuff hanging down from the loins as far as to the knees. This style of garment is now worn by most of the young heathen round Lourenço Marques; it is sometimes combined with the madjobo which are still in use. But men, and especially youngsters, soon aspire to something better: trousers and jackets! (1) However ungainly the Native may appear when duly arrayed in coat and trousers, there is nothing he covets more than these garments. As they cannot all afford complete suits of "dittos", they often have to be satisfied with such odds and ends as they can get from the Banyans, or pick up from

(1) The taste for European fabrics is said by thoughtful Natives to have been the cause of the loss of their independence. This is how they support this somewhat astonishing theory: "Without this", said one of them to me, pulling the flap of my coat, "the Whites would never have conquered us! In our wars with them there have always been some folks who would not give up the stuffs, and so made alliance with the Europeans. We were divided, and thus our power of resistance was broken".

their European masters. One sees them gravely walking about in worn-out long frock coats, the trousers being conspicuous by their absence. Others think themselves very fortunate if they can manage to get hold of a very much patched waistcoat, with which to adorn themselves: the rest of the body remaining stark naked... except, of course, for the indispensable belt of tails. One day a Rikatla lad came to see me with an eye glass fixed triumphantly on his forehead, and when I asked him what was the use of that article he replied, really meaning what he said : "Ndji yambalile" — "I have dressed." He intended to do me honour. The same lad came, on another occasion, wearing coquettishly on his head a lady's black lace hat, which he seemed to consider very "chic". I much preferred the get-up of an individual, by name Glas, who put a red lily in his crispy hair, and made a chin strap of a flexible reed which he passed through the holes in his ears on either sides, thus framing his face. Every Thonga has already learned to know a *buluku* (trousers), a *djansi* (jacket), a *fascikoti* (apron, a corruption of the word waistcoat), a *hembe* (shirt), *masokisi* and *memeya* (stockings) and *shilembe* (hat). The majority of these words have doubtless come from the Boer dialect, and have changed somewhat in passing into the language of the Natives.

The "civilised" attain the height of bliss when they are able to procure an irreproachable suit of clothes, and it is a sight to behold these young men returning direct from Johannesburg, dressed in the latest style, with a white starched shirt, a silk cummerbund, and jacket and trousers to match. They think themselves handsome! We do not share their illusion! How often have we not longed to see them adopt some costume that would tone with their colour, their customs, their occupations, their climate! They want to be like us! What can be done? (1)

(1) I have heard it asserted that the adoption of European clothing by the Blacks tends to enfeeble them, even to the extent of rendering them liable to new diseases. Some one assured me that the introduction of tuberculosis amongst them is due to their clothes. This assertion is at least very much exaggerated. However it is certain that the exposure of their skin to the rays of the sun was highly healthy. On the other hand, they do not know that

Their idea of costume is evidently different from ours: they consider it as an adornment rather than as a real protection against cold or heat. If it rains, if it is cold, they much prefer to wrap themselves in the big rug (ngubo, mpisi-mpisi), which they all buy to sleep under at night. The end of the evolution will certainly be that they will adopt exactly the same dress as their European masters: the whole suit for the men, frocks, hats and boots for the women; as soon as the majority of them get enough money to buy these, they will do so, and seeing how particular most of them are as regards their external appearance, it may be safely anticipated that Bantu beauties will submit to the tyranny of the London or Paris fashions as readily as our European élégantes!

It will be easy to see the evolution of dress in the Bantu tribe by comparing the illustration of the South African woman (a Suto, I. p. 44) representing the first stage, those of the Thonga women (I. p. 181 et 193) and the Maputju girls (I. p. 182) representing the second stage, Camilla, depicting a third stage, and the ordinary European frock forming the fourth one.

As for men, I unfortunately possess no picture of the primitive *mbaya*. But the following stages are illustrated by the two Zulu boys (p. 79) by the habitué of the Nkuna Court (I. p. 408), and by Tobane (I. p. 4) and Muhlaba (I. p. 399).

II. *Ornaments.*

The taste for decoration, for ornament, is innate with the Black. Ages ago, before he took to fixing a flower in his hair, he used to tatoo himself. We have already described (I. p. 179) the various patterns of *tattooing* of men and wo-

wet clothing must be changed, (they perhaps have no second suit to wear), so they catch cold, and pneumonia or pleurisy sets in... I have also heard it stated that the second-hand, cast-off garments which traders sell them often infect them with syphilis (especially after circumcision), or other poisons.

men, and have pointed out that this custom has probably had a social signification in former times, though for the present it is practised as an adornment.

As regards *hair* (nsisi, mu-mi), women often cut it, men less frequently. A man only cuts it when his wife dies, as a sign of mourning : it is a taboo (I. p. 146). In former times they never shaved their beards. People made fun of those who did so saying : "Are you an Angolese ?" (Angolese, who are numerous in the neighbourhood of Lourenço-Marques, used to shave their beards). Young men sometimes let two or three of their curls grow on their forehead like horns ! Others elongate their curls and smear them with a gluey substance, obtained from the nkanye tree. This is called *ku hoba misisi*. As regards women, those who are nursing babies regularly turn their hair into an ornament : the small curls are pulled and elongated, smeared with fat and made to fall on the temples, and on the occiput ; they are then covered with ochre. This operation is called : *ku hora misisi*, and the rat tails thus produced are the *tingoya* ; they are the characteristic ornament of women during the nursing period. Nurses certainly think the tingoya improve their appearance. " Look ! She has *hora misisi !* How this suits her ! " people will say of a woman who has succeeded in transforming her hair in this way. But this custom has also a ritual value. (1)

Nursing women cover all their body, their clothing, their *ntehe* (I. p. 44) with *ochre*. The habit of anointing (tota) or smearing with ochre (tshumane) goes hand in hand with that of tingoya. This rather disgusting custom classifies them as nursing, and is a protection (shisibelo) against the husband : So long as a woman covers herself with ochre, it is a sign that she will not cohabit with him. They also say that ochre prevents the bad smell resulting from children being dirty, and that it softens

(1) The Ngoni taught the Northern Thonga another and more elaborate way of curling the hair : the queens, wives of Gungunyane, transform their " thatch " into regular cylindrical chignons (shifoko), standing up like towers (I. p. 389). The Ba-Ronga have not adopted this custom, except, in some cases, the chiefs. (I. p. 360).

the ntehe and makes the baby grow. (1) The skin of children is also covered with a coating of this pigment; some say it is not so much with the object of beautifying as of hiding the dirt which mothers are too lazy to remove! No wonder if, in these conditions, it has been found that this smearing with ochre fosters conjunctivitis and other diseases!

The use of ochre is, however, not restricted to nursing mothers or magicians: it is the special province of young marriageable girls, wishing to attract attention: their brilliant skin reflecting like mirrors, and setting off to perfection the white of their eyes and the black of their hair, which is sometimes made flossy by means of antimony or ground charcoal. A quaint saying puts it thus:

> Shindzingeri pundjene? -Banhwanyana tolan!...
> What says the pretty bird with the coral neck that sings in the grass?
> It says: Girls, anoint yourselves with ochre! (if you want to be as beautiful as it is).

Another ornament, of ancient date, is the *bracelet*. There are several kinds: 1) the big heavy copper rings, called *masindana*, which greatly resemble those of the lake-dwellers, having a similar rather oval shape with an opening to slip them over the wrist; 2) the modern bracelets, called *busenga*, which the Ronga first bought in Natal, and which the Malemba introduced in the Northern clans. They are made of iron wire twined round a ring of hide; 3) the *mafowa* are more ancient, being made of seeds strung on thongs of skins, and are wound several times round the leg. This is an ornament for either dance or war. The mafowa are sometimes made of silvery cocoons of Tropaea Mimosae, the Queen Moth, which are found

(1) It is very curious to notice that these two feminine ways of adorning themselves, the tingoya and the ochre, have been adopted by the magicians: those who pretend to have a supernatural power in smelling out witches and treating possessed people (Part VI). They like to assume the appearance of women. People suffering from the Ba-Ndjao possession especially use ochre. Their spirits order them to do so: they would torment their victims should hese not obey.

Ornaments, calabashes, pottery.

on nkanye trees, emptied of the chrysalis which is inside and filled with grains of millet which rattle when dancing !

Beads (nkarara) are evidently of later date ; they were introduced by the Whites in the XVI[th] century, when the Portuguese were already in regular communication with Delagoa Bay and trafficked with the Natives, exchanging glassware for gold and ivory. Glass fascinated the Blacks : its brightness and transparency pleased them immensely. An old song echoes their simple transports of delight :

> E ! Bashabi ! Batatana ba shabile ; ba buya ni shintshirimana sha balungoooo !...
>
> Hi ! Here come the buyers ! Our fathers return with their purchases ; they bring back with them the beautiful glittering things which the Whites sell !...

" A few years ago an ordinary glass bottle was thought to be a wonder by the people in the interior ", said Timoteo Mandlati to me. (He was a Nkuna from Shiluvane). It is not strange therefore that they became enamoured of beads. They give them special names, according to colour and size, and succeed in making very good use of them. The chief ornament the women make, (beadwork is exclusively done by the women), is the *mugangu* (N° 2), used in love-making (gangisa) ; it is a kind of crown of blue beads with red chevrons, worn by girls when they want to beautify themselves. Some are wide and some narrow ; the beads are strung on threads which are crossed and knotted as the work proceeds : no canvas foundation is used. The bead necklace is called *shibekisana*. Bead bracelets on the wrist are *shibolisa*, and on the ankles *maluwada*. Beads are also used in making large and heavy belts (mugadzi), weighing one to two pounds, and very much appreciated as an ornament when dancing. In the same way calabashes (N° 5) are covered with beads, bags made of hide (N° 4), bottles and even baskets. This bead work calls for a good deal of patience. One of the things which the Ronga most dearly loves to have decorated with beads is his tobacco pouch, (ngulana, N° 3), which is for him not only a means of satisfying his passion

for taking snuff, but also one of his most prized ornaments. I do not now refer to the carved ebony tobacco box, worn *en bandoulière*, but to the article which consists of eight or nine large seeds, hollowed out, in which is kept the powder which stimulates the brain. Each of these seeds (which come from another country) is closed with a small piece of reed ; when one is walking they rattle against each other, producing a most charming sound ! The first thing a man will say to a friend on meeting him, will be : " Fole ? " — " Tobacco ? " and before anything further is said, each will indulge in a pinch. The same act of politeness is essential before beginning any discussion. The Thonga does not smoke the calumet of peace, but uses for a like purpose the many receptacled tobacco pouch, all decorated with beads, which hangs from his belt at his hip. He takes from it a pinch of snuff, which he offers to his opponent ; the latter takes another pinch himself and proceedings then commence under the happiest auspices. Hearts are not far from concord... when noses have already fraternised !

Beads are nothing but an ornament and have no ritual value, except the large white ones used by people possessed by the Ba-Ndjao spirits. (Part VI).

B. HABITATION

If there has been such a rapid change in Thonga customs regarding dress, — so rapid that in these last fifty years they have changed more in that respect than during the fifty preceding centuries —, in the field of architecture the tribe appears to have stood still ; their huts are built precisely as they were in ancient times. It is true that it is easier to put on a jacket, and trousers, than to alter the style of one's house : besides it must be admitted that the Thonga hut possesses several advantages. It is comparatively easy to construct, cool in the hot weather, perfectly watertight in the rainy season and is fairly ingeniously contrived.

That which is called *yindlu* (yin-tin) properly speaking, is

more especially the *roof* of the hut (lwango, dji-ma); for it is the roof which is the most troublesome to make. Also, a strange fact, and one which appears paradoxical, is that, in the construction (ku yaka) of the house, they begin at the roof!

The Thonga architect — and every man is his own in that country — gathers together a few hundred straight sticks, one to one and half inches in width and from three to ten feet in length. He digs a hole in the ground, a yard and a half in diameter and 16 inches deep, in which he arranges his sticks in a circle, points downwards, in the bottom of the hole, and supported in such a manner that they lie at an angle of 45 degrees with the ground. Any one of these sticks will thus be at about a right angle with the opposite one, and all together they form, as it were, a huge conical basket with its point in the hole. To fasten all the sticks together, he ties them to round hoops (something like cask hoops) made of bent branches. These hoops (balelo, dji-ma) are concentric, very small at the bottom, and getting gradually larger as the work progresses. Any spaces which remain between the sticks first arranged are filled up, one after the other, with shorter sticks, which are pushed in here and there as the building proceeds, and the architect finishes by obtaining a sort of enormous pointed hat lying on its apex, all the branches and sticks composing it being solidly tied together with strips of a very resistant bark, that of the bulolo Hibiscus (p. 32) or of other trees. It is now only necessary to turn the big cone over, to place it on a wall, and there you have the typical Thonga hut.

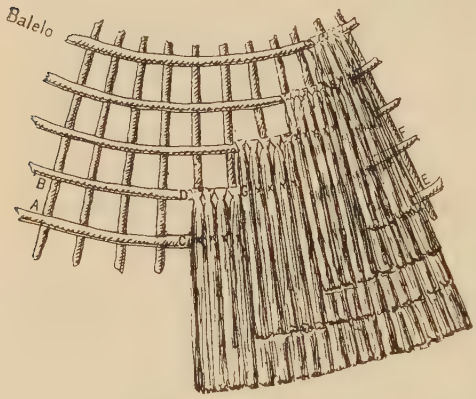
The *wall* is built with stakes, about four feet in length above the ground, planted at intervals on the circumference of a circle which the architect traces with wonderful accuracy on the sand. He then takes two flexible branches and fastens them to the stakes, at a height of one foot above the ground, the whole way round the wall; one on the inside, the other on the outside. Between these branches and in the spaces from stake to stake are inserted reeds of the same height, completing the wall: the reeds are firmly fastened to the supporting branches by a band passing alternately over and underneath them. The same opera-

tion is repeated half way up the wall (two feet above the ground), and again at three quarters of the height (three feet). The wall is now ready to put on its large conical hat, which will fit it perfectly : a cone on a cylinder !

Placing the roof in position (ku tlakula yindlu), the next procedure requires the display of considerable muscular energy. All the men of the village are convened for the job : their strong arms raise the monumental basket and place it triumphantly on the wall. Beer is then given to the helpers, and a little jollification ensues ; the equivalent of the "fête du petit sapin enrubanné" which the carpenters celebrate in Switzerland when they have completed the roof of a house.

The roof must now be *covered* (fulela) *with a thatch* (byanyi) to make it impermeable to the heavy rains of the wet season, and it is here that considerable ingenuity is displayed in the method adopted. The Thonga pulls up by the roots, in the low lands, at the borders of the lakes, a kind of very wide grass (luhlwa), which attains a height of one and half to two feet : this he separates into small bunches which he lays side by side on the ground and ties them together, one by one, with his string made of bark, fastening them with a special knot. The result is a series of hundreds of contiguous bunches seemingly sewn together with a regular seam, at about 6 inches above the roots. This can be rolled up like a mat, forming a beautiful sheaf, and carried away on the workman's shoulder to be placed on the roof. Once there, it is unrolled and fastened to the hoop of branches forming the outer circle at the base of the cone. One man runs a huge needle, threaded with a long string, through the thatch, taking care to do so just above the seam which unites the bunches of grass ; another man, who is inside the hut, catches the needle and pushes it back again through the thatch, but, in his case, just underneath the seam : the two thus continue sewing the thatch, with long stitches, all round, so that the seam itself is securely fixed to the outer hoop at the base of the roof. When they have completed the circle and provided the hut with a first belt of thatch, they fetch another sheaf of grass and unroll it on the next hoop above. Now a

certain proportion is to be observed between the distance separating the two hoops (A B) and that of the seam from the roots of the grass (C D); that is to say if, for instance, the space between the concentric hoops is five inches, the seam will he six inches above the roots; whence the following result: the roots of the thatch fixed to the lower hoop (A E) reach as far as the second hoop (B F) and even overlap slightly. The fresh sheaf which will be sewn on to the second hoop will thus be imbricated on the first sheaf in such a way that its seam will be tied practically on the top of the roots of the lower sheaf. On the second hoop there will therefore be a double thickness of thatch (at point G) all round the hut. As the *luhlwa* is about 24 inches in length, it follows that the third and fourth sheaves or layers of thatch will also lie over the second hoop; the thickness of the thatch at this point will thus be fourfold, as also all over the hut. A well built roof of this description is perfectly rain-proof. As the work goes on, it becomes more and more encouraging, as the hoops diminish in size and the apex is reached almost unexpectedly.



Construction of the Thonga roof.

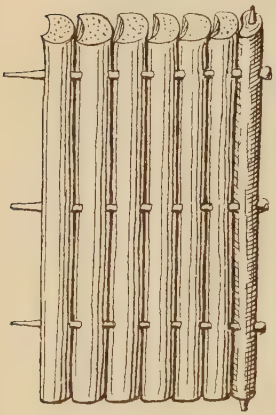
On the top of the cone is fastened a *circular crown* (shihlungwa) of very carefully plaited grass; the architect doubtless had a double object in view in thus crowning the huts: firstly to keep the rain from percolating through at the top, and secondly to impart to the building, by means of this richly ornamental addition, a degree of finish, an air of beauty, ease and opulence which it certainly would never have possessed had it terminated in an ordinary common point. It is, no doubt, owing to the fact that the crown is

the glory of the house that it is removed as soon as the occupant dies !

There are still two more operations to be performed before the hut is finished : *the plastering* (bama (Ro), phama (Dj) and the making of the *door*. But these two jobs can be undertaken at the same time for the very good reason that plastering is the work of the wives, while making the door is that of the husband ! Accompanied by other women of the village, the future mistress of the hut starts out for the marshes to collect some black clay (bompfi). If the marshes be too far off, she will content herself with digging in one of the ants'nests on the hillside. These terrible ants, which destroy everything, collect large quantities of hard earth, with which to build their nests, which differs largely from the sand of the surroundings. (Perhaps it may be simply sand hardened and changed by the acid secretions of the termites ?) The shirondjo, the conical basket which women carry on their heads, will be used to take home clods of red or black clay, and, using the same baskets, they will fetch from the cattle kraal some fresh dung which they mix with the clay, inside the new hut, pouring water on the mixture to reduce it to the proper consistency. They tread the unsavoury mud with their feet, and, with this semi-liquid mortar, plaster the wall on the inside, introducing the mud between the reeds and spreading it out with the palms of their hands until it forms a smooth layer all round the interior. Not a ray of light can now enter the hut, except through some small open spaces to be seen, here and there, between the roof and the top of the wall. The air circulates more or less through those small vents, which, however, were not included in the original plan of the hut. The remainder of the clay makes a hard even flooring which will be recovered from time to time with a fresh coating of black plaster (I. p. 187).

As regards the *door*, the Ba-Ronga in the country round Rikatla generally make it of the wood of the mimale palm (Rufia rafia ? See page 4). They cut down one or two of the giant leaves of this tree, which grows in the marshes. The leaf itself is one enormous central stalk with narrow folioles

on either side ; these are cut off and the nerve remains : a sort of gigantic switch, twenty to thirty feet in length, about four to six inches wide at the base and tapering gradually to its point, convex on one side, and concave on the other. Once dried, it turns a grey colour. The interior is a fibrous pith, of extraordinarily light weight, whilst the exterior bark is very thin, hard and shiny as though it had been varnished with copal. It is impossible to imagine a lighter wood. Comfortably established under the shady trees of the square, our joiner cuts the nerve into several pieces of a given length (say about four feet, the height of the wall). This is not difficult, for it is only necessary to cut through the thin outer bark, when the knife slips through the inner pith, like so much butter ! These lengths are then bored through from front to back in three places, say at one, two and three feet from the bottom, and three stout sticks are passed through the holes, firmly holding the several pieces of the nerve together : this makes the door. The ends of the transverse sticks are fixed into a pole which is pointed top and bottom, thus forming pivots or hinges.



Door of a Ronga hut.

The *sill* consists simply of a piece of wood (ntjandja wa shipfalo) laid flat on the ground, with one edge raised so that the door cannot be opened outwards. It must always open inwards, doubtless with a view to facilitate the exclusion of unwelcome visitors by the simple expedient of sitting with one's back against it. The threshold is not attended with taboos, excepting that of the principal hut of the master of the village, as protective drugs have been placed under it at the foundation of his village. It is taboo to sit on it (this may cause a disease), but not to tread on it. Most huts are now fitted with padlocks which are, of course, of European origin. The palm wood doors are only seen in the districts where the mimale palm grows.

A number of small sticks are set in the straw crown at the top of the hut, and certainly add to the picturesque appearance of these constructions. It seems they are put there to hinder birds from perching on the huts, and more especially to avoid any chance visit during the night from screech-owls (mankungunu) and other nocturnal fowl, which might alight on the hut and terrify the occupants by their lugubrious cries.

The Thonga hut. *Phot. A. Borel.*

I might mention another advantage of the Thonga hut. Between the sticks and the hoops of the roof, small interstices, of a few square inches, are left when the thatch is in place; in these small lockers all kinds of things are stowed away: ears of sorghum, or of millet, kept for seed, sticks, spoons or knives; baskets can be hung up, by hitching the string by which they are usually carried across the shoulder, over the end of the spoon sticking out of the thatch. On entering a hut the roof looks like a regular museum; it is useful as cupboard or hanging wardrobe!

The Thonga hut, formed of two distinct parts, wall and

roof, is far superior to that of the Zulu which looks like a bee hive, and consists only of a semi-circular roof. Our tribe know how to build this kind of huts, but they are generally made quite small (six feet in diameter) and used as shelters for the boys who look after the goats. They are called *mitjhonga*. The Ba-Ngoni adopted their system of building from the Thonga of the plain, and Gungunyane constructed huge conical

The Native tin town near Pretoria Station. *Phot. A. Borel.*

huts, but the entrances were still smaller than those of the Ba-Ronga. To get in, it was necessary to wriggle, or at least to go on all fours (1).

(1) I have previously described the *shitlanta*, storehouses of various sizes, made for storing maize and other field produce, and have given (p. 27) an illustration of two of them, especially interesting as they contain the food of Sokis, who died from a sudden attack of pulmonary tuberculosis (lifuba). The provisions which are in the large storehouse must be sold as they are contaminated and dangerous to members of his family; the small one contains mealies bought from other people for his widows, who are not allowed to consume the food of the deceased, whilst strangers have nothing to fear from it. (See on the notions of contagion, Part VI.)

Dealing only with the architectural side of the subject, I do not revert to its social side. Let me merely state that the hut is divided in two parts, the right half belonging to the husband and the left to the wife (I. p. 138, 187), that it is contaminated by the death of its owner, and, being considered as a *rumbi*, a ruin, must be pierced through (I. p. 138), deprived of its crown (I. p. 144), ritually crushed down (I. p. 156) or closed (I. p. 162, 164).

Nobody will deny that the conical roofed Thonga hut is charming to see, and is in wonderful keeping with the African scenery. To judge how "Civilisation" improves the condition of things for the Natives of South Africa, let my readers contemplate the Native village as it was a few years ago, in the vicinity of the Pretoria Station. Boys working at the Railway had built a horrible mass of tiny sheds of old paraffin tins, cut and flattened for the purpose. There is no lack of imagination in those constructions, but they are a perfect illustration of what the raw Native becomes when plunged suddenly into our XXth century civilisation and tries in his poverty and ignorance to adapt himself to it. I am glad to say that, in the Missionary Stations, where Native Christians are directed by their missionaries, they build much better houses, having learnt to mould clay into bricks, and to build ovens. Some of them are good masons and know the use of the level and of the square.

C. UTENSILS

Nature, which has provided the Ba-Ronga with skins of animals for clothing, and with poles, reeds, grasses and fibrous barks for their habitations, has also favoured them with several exceedingly useful trees of which they have not been slow to take advantage. Of these the most valuable is the *milala* palm, used for nearly all basket-work ; then the *nkuhlu* whose wood is particularly serviceable for all descriptions of carving. She has also deposited in their plains beds of clay, of more or less desi-

rable quality, which they use for making pottery. I shall begin with the latter.

I. *Pottery.*

An excellent clay is to be found at Shibindji, in the environs of Lourenço Marques, a district close to Morakwen, and the

Fashioning the pots. *Phot. A. Borel.*

people of this place — they are those who abstain from eating any animal liver (I. p. 336) — are the potters who supply the whole country. They are said to be the masters (benyi) of the art. But clay is found in many other places, in Shifukundju, Mpatshiki, etc. It is said that the clay of Muweri, near the Lemons' Island, on the Lower Nkomati, is even better than that of Shibindji. So the art of potter does not belong to a single family, and is not hereditary. Any one may learn it and practise it. Pottery amongst the Thonga, is essentially woman's province. Is it because earthenware utensils are principally used in the kitchen, where woman's

sway is paramount and indisputed? Possibly; anyway thus it is.

Let us suppose then that the mother of a family wants to renew, or to add to her stocks of pots, large and small. She starts out for the marshes, picks up in the well known hollow several clods of clay and returns to the village carrying them on her head. No one salutes her: everyone pretends not to see her,

Constructing the furnace. *Phot. A. Borel.*

doubtless to avoid bringing any ill luck to the venture! She buries the clay at the foot of a tree to keep it moist, and only takes it out of her hiding place the day on which she has decided to start the work.

Let us see by means of some photographs, taken by the much regretted A. Borel, how Meta, a Shibindji girl, married in Rikatla, proceeds in her work. Placing a broken piece of an old pot in the mortar, she pounds it until it is reduced to small fragments, the size of a grain of maize: these she mixes with her clay, adding water and sand, and kneads the whole together until she has made it into a very soft ball. She makes a

hole in it, a wide opening which she enlarges by degrees, hollowing it out more and more and gradually giving it the shape she wishes. I have already alluded to the clever way in which the Blacks trace the circumference of a circle on the ground (I. p. 125); the same natural instinct enables them to model perfect spheres. It is astonishing to see the beautiful symmetry of these utensils, although these pots are fashioned without

The furnace ready. *Phot. A. Borel.*

the aid of wheel or measuring instrument of any kind. The jar, still soft and wet, is put on one side. Then is the time for decoration with very simple designs, generally triangular, after which the industrious worker leaves it to dry for a few hours, taking care to cover the opening with a thin piece of wood to prevent the wind from putting it out of shape. As soon as she dares to lift it without danger, she turns it over, smooths the bottom (tshaku), which will harden in its turn, and places the pot in a hut where it continues to dry in the shade. On the day she chooses for the firing, she digs a hole in the sand, arranges the various pieces of pottery in it and covers them

with a heap of small pieces of wood or with palm pith ; this she sets alight, and keeps a quick clear fire burning until she considers the firing is finished, when she leaves her well reddened utensils to cool down (hola). The cooling accomplished, she commences to inspect the result of her work. This is the psychological moment ! How many have cracked, how many have withstood the testing ? The worthless ones are smashed,

Result of the firing. *Phot. A. Borel.*

and the perfect ones reserved to be painted a brilliant brown, which is done with a decoction of the bark of the mangrove (nkapa) and of the nkanye, boiled with a kind of creeper (mahlehlwa), which has a sticky sap. Such is the primitive method followed in the manufacture of all Native pottery.

The process of firing being often unsuccessful, taboos are plentiful in the manufacture. When women collect the clay, only one of them digs and gives it to the others ; should each one make haste to dig for herself, this would bring mishap : the pots would break. If no accident happens and the firing is successful, these women will say : "She who dug the other day

has a lucky hand (a ni boko dja hombe). Let her dig again another time ". When the clay has been hidden in the ground, at the foot of a tree, it is also taboo to tread on the place, when walking through the village. When the heap of wood is ready, the potteress will call a little child, an innocent one, to set fire to the furnace. She shows it where to put the glowing ember, and, if the result of the firing is good, she will always call the same child on future occasions.

Should all these precautions be useless, and the woman see that she does not succeed, she will go so far as to consult the bones, and, if they so order, she will make an offering to her gods, gods of the father, gods of the mother, or possessing gods (Part VI), if she is a spirit-possessed woman, as the bones may declare. People will say to her: " You manufacture pots and sell them and do not give anything to your gods : that will not do ! " So she will offer a piece of clothing, a coin, etc., at the altar *(gandjelo)*.

Another taboo in connection with the making of a pot is this : when a pot has been fired, it must still be *tested* ; this operation is called *ku khangula*, or *kwangula*, and is performed in the following way : a little water is poured into it and the potteress washes it thoroughly ; then some grains of maize are cooked in it and thrown away. This must remove the *nkwangu*, or *nkhangu*, viz., the danger attending the use of an untested, unpurified pot : people using such an implement would suffer from an eruption on the arms, and even on the whole body. To give some one food to eat from a pot which has not been *khangula* is considered as an act of hatred.

Phot. D. Lenoir.

Pots used to draw water.

The pot, or boiler, used for cooking is called *nhlambeto* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *mbita* (yin-tin Dj.) ; it has a very wide opening. Smaller boilers are also made, even quite diminutive ones called *shihlembetwana* or *shimbitana*. The beer jar (khu-

wana, dji-ma), illustration on page 85, N° 13) is of the same size as the boiler, but can be easily recognised by its straighter neck Enormous beer jars are sometimes manufactured, perfect amphoras (hotjo, yin-tin), but they rarely stand the firing and are therefore scarce and expensive, fetching as much as ten shillings each : they may be two feet high ; the ordinary

A young Spelonken artist and his work. *Phot. Dentan.*

cooking pot does not cost more than sixpence. The porringers, or large plates, are called *mbenga* (mu, mi ; N° 12). (1)

Shibindji clay is also used for making some very short *pipes* (shipana), prettily shaped, probably in imitation of the European cutty. Smoking does not seem to be an indigenous habit ; in the interior one rarely sees a Native with a pipe in his mouth, tobacco being almost exclusively used in the form of snuff. The only smokers in the country are the old women of Lou-

(1) No 11, on page 85, shows a small vase modelled by a young Native girl, an invalid from Natal (Station of Inanda).

rençe Marques, and the youthful dandies who try to imitate the Transvaal Boers!

Clay modelling is perhaps the art for which South Africans are best gifted. In all the tribes children amuse themselves by modelling oxen, human beings, wheels, even waggons, sometimes very cleverly. I knew a boy in Shiluvane who was a true artist and could imitate everything he saw, for instance a white lady with her hat. (1) The adjoining plate shows one of these young artists, from Spelonken, with his modellings!

II. *Basket-work.*

The milala palm, whose sap supplies the tipplers of Pesene with their famous busura (p. 41), is a very valuable tree for the Ba-Ronga, as it is of its leaves that the greater part of the baskets in use by this tribe are made. The basket-maker gathers the most perfect leaves. These are not like the mimale folioles, growing opposite one another on a central nerve. The *milala* (plur. of nala) are true palms, the leaves consisting of folioles of a half to one inch in width radiating from a common centre, which itself grows on the end of a long peduncle.

These trees are found in the woods of Mabota, Nondwane, Tembe, Nondwane, on the Coast, and in the low plains of the North Eastern Zoutpansberg, etc., sometimes in large numbers. Returning home, the workman (here we employ the masculine, as basket-making is essentially man's work) spreads out the leaves in the sun to dry, having previously straightened the folioles somewhat, separating (hangela) them one from the other; when they dry, they turn a light grey colour with a shining polished surface, and are then hung up in the hut where they will be sheltered from the dew and ready for use. When the

(1) The same boy, without having received any special training, knew how to cut out a frock, and used to make the dresses of all the brides of the congregation. He had a wonderful eye for form and would have made his mark, had he received a professional training. But he died from consumption contracted in the towns!

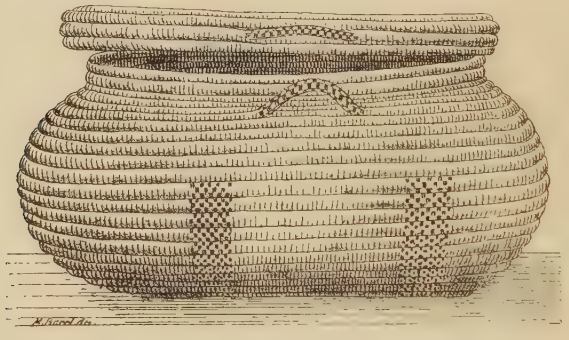
work is to be started, the folioles are torn (phatlula) from their peduncle, and, with a sharp pointed instrument, are split longitudinally into strips or straws of 1/8 or 2/8 of an inch wide, the ribs of the leaves (nhlamalala, yin-tin) being carefully kept; these delicate wands have their special use.

The Ronga basket makers are very fond of decorating their baskets with *designs in black*. These triangular and square patterns are produced by artistically plaiting dark and light coloured straws, and are not painted on after the baskets are manufactured. The straw is dyed black in the following manner: it is soaked in the black ooze (ntjhaka) of the marshes for two weeks, and then laid out to dry, which gives it a brownish-reddish colour. This hue is deepened by a second treatment. The leaves of a shrub called *mpsabutimu* are gathered and placed in a pot with the brown-red milala in alternate layers, until the utensil is full: water is then poured over them and the whole put on to boil; very soon the straw becomes a brilliant black. The basket-maker has now only to pull up some of the grass growing in the hollow near the lake, dry it, and he is ready to commence work.

In the adjoining plates illustrations will be found of the principal specimens of this art, sterotyped shapes which have passed on from generation to generation, doubtless from prehistoric times, and are called respectively: *ngula, hwama, shihundju, lihlelo* and *nhluto*.

The *ngula* (yin-tin) (p. 26) takes the place of honour, and is the most prized of all the Ronga baskets. It requires days or even weeks of continuous work to make one, but the result is worthy of the time and labour bestowed upon it; I brought with me to Europe several *ngula* of various sizes. The particular one, shown below, is oval and measures six feet two inches in circumference; but there are many much larger, both spheroid and ovoid. This is how they make or, to use the technical Native term, "tlhaba" — "pierce" this basket. The workman takes his dried grass and plaits it, lengthening the plait according to requirements, as he goes along: this plait is bound round, and entirely hidden, by a special binding

of palm leaf straw, thus forming a thickish cord of about half an inch in diameter, the cord is soon doubled back upon itself, and constitutes a centre, around which are fixed several concentric rings ; each inner ring is pierced with a kind of awl and the straw of the outer ring pushed into the hole, thus fixing them securely together. Hence the expression *thlaba ngula*, to pierce a ngula. The bottom is soon finished, and differs but little in appearance from an ordinary straw-mat, such as is used to prevent hot dishes spoiling the polish of the European dining table. The sides are made in the same manner by superposing rings of the straw cord, giving the basket a well rounded convex



Ngula.

shape, after which two or three rings are superimposed perpendicularly, making the opening, the mouth of the chef d'œuvre. The cover, made in the same way, must fit exactly over the mouth of the basket ; in fact it should require to be slightly forced over it : the fastening will then hold better. On the upper part of the basket, as also on the cover, the manufacturer has carefully plaited four handles, two corresponding pairs, those on the basket pointing upward while those on the cover point downward, so that they meet. Two rings also plaited, are passed round through each pair of handles, forming simple, but solid hinges round which the cover can turn without ever being separated from the basket, of which it is henceforward an integral part. A well made ngula is perfectly impermeable, and

not the smallest hole can be found in it. I think it would even hold water. Surely such a basket is a work of art!

The ngula is the Native's Savings Bank. In it he keeps all his riches, the best grains of maize, or the best grown monkey nuts, reserved for seed at the next rainy season ; also the stuff

Manufacturing a ngula in Spelonken. *Phot. P. Rosset.*

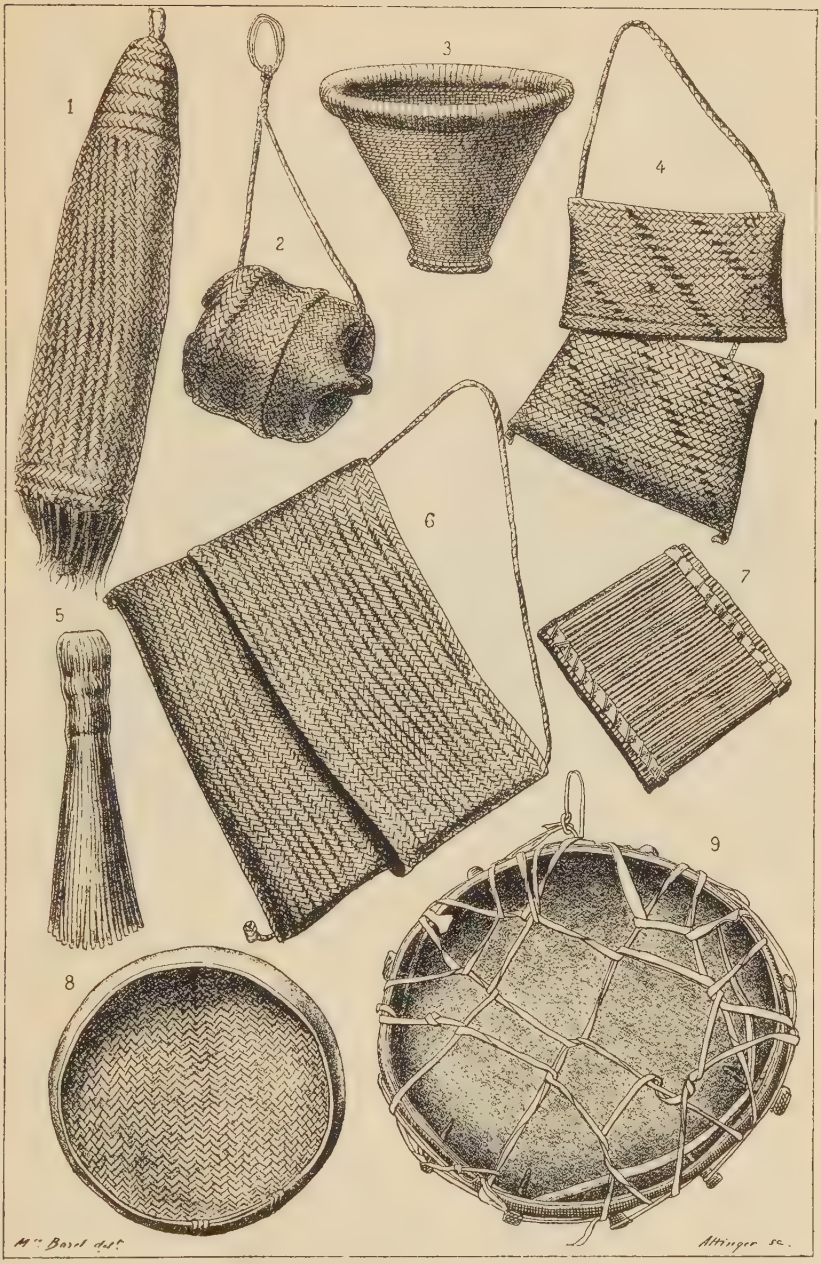
with which the women will deck themselves on grand occasions, etc. The enormous basket reposes at the far end of the hut, on a low table (buhiri) specially designed for the purpose. The ngula of the Northern clans, where palm leaves are not to be found, is more rounded and the palm straws replaced by solid dry grass. (See the adjoining illustration).

If the ngula is enthroned in the hut, and never moves out of it, the *hwama* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *funeko* (Dj.) (N° 4 and 6), on the contrary, is the wallet of the traveller. It is a square bag made of plaited palm straw. The cover is about as large as

the bag itself and, so that it should not be lost (which might easily happen while travelling), it is secured by the string used as a shoulder strap for carrying the *hwama*, being passed through it. The bag can thus be opened by sliding the cover right along the string, but it cannot be entirely separated from it. These bags are of different sizes, and some more ornamental than others. A round variety is also made by a certain basket-maker of Masana. He makes three or four projecting horns to his hwama, which then takes a cylindrical shape, and has the advantage of being able to stand up when placed on the ground. This bag or basket, is called *shiraba* or *baki* (N° 2); it is the kind used by the magicians for carrying their medicines, and bones.

The third classic shape of Ronga basket-ware (N° 3) is the *shihundju* (Ro.) *shirundju* (Dj.), the conical basket employed by the women for transporting maize, clay and manure. (It is by no means certain that the shihundju is cleaned out between these several loads!) It is made much in the same way as the roof of a hut, point downwards, ribs of folioles taking the place of sticks. This basket may be said to be the special property of the women (I. p. 217): they are very clever at balancing it on their heads; it is very rarely that a woman, old or young, lets her shihundju fall. When empty it is turned upside down and serves as a hat. It is a really pretty sight to see the young girls starting out for the fields with their conical baskets standing straight on their fuzzy locks. When they are travelling and arrive at a friendly village, holding themselves perfectly upright, shooting glances here and there without stooping or turning their heads, their friends rush out to meet them, seize their shihundju and place them on the ground, in small holes which they hastily make in the sand. This is the first duty of hospitality amongst women!

The *lihlelo* (N° 8) is used by cooks for winnowing the maize. Palm leaves not being sufficiently strong for this purpose, the lihlelo is made of the roots, cut into strips, of a tree called *nukanhlelo* (a kind of mimosa), and is coated with a reddish brown varnish prepared from mangrove bark. It is the



Thonga weaving.

(One sixth of the natural size.)

lihlelo, or rather a smaller basket of the same sort called *ndjewane*, that the house-wife takes with her when picking little wild cucumbers, or gathering the various herbs which serve for the supplementary noontide luncheon.

In the Northern clans one often meets with a spherical basket made of the same material as the winnowing basket and covered with a regular lihlelo.

Besides the foregoing, the Ba-Ronga have two or three bas-

Phot. A. Borel.

Carrying lihlelo baskets, grinding and pounding mealies.

kets which are not in such general use : the *nhlaba*, a kind of plaited bag with interstices between the palm straws, for carrying fish, the *ntjaba*, etc.

Another article, which might, at first sight, be taken for a basket, but which serves quite a different purpose, is the *nhluto*, the strainer. (N° 1). This strainer of unusual shape, is a sort of long bag of plaited straw into which is poured the beer made from maize : the particles in suspension in this liquor are caught by the straws overlapping the top, or accumulate at the bottom, whilst the liquid filters through the interstices of the plait. The

thick sediment remaining in the strainer can then be squeezed so as to extract all the beer. This straining and squeezing has the effect of rendering the drink much more alcoholic (p. 40).

The art of basket-making is by no means commonplace. Practised by men only, it is, in certain families, in certain villages, handed down from father to son. Children with a natural taste for this sort of work are initiated into its mysteries by their parents. But no young man is ever forced to take up the profession of a basket-maker. His heart (mbilu) must be in it! Amongst primitive peoples art, and even industry, always remains a matter of individual genius. It never becomes a mechanical output, as is the case in the factories of the civilised world : this is why it retains a character of individuality, sincerity and natural beauty, not always to be met with in the products of the XXth century European industry !

In the environs of Lourenço Marques, in our sub-station of Masana, lived the family of Tumbene (I. p. 270), famous for its ngula. One of the sons inherited the father's talent. He was an evangelist in our Mission, and, when he was but a lad, people came to him, from far and wide, to have their old baskets or broken lihlelo repaired.

Although basket-making is confined to certain families who more or less monopolise the business, without, however, preventing any one from practising the art, the manufacture of *straw mats*, or matting (*likuku*, li-tin (Ro.), *rikuku* (Dj.)), is very wide-spread. Many men know how to "tlhaba likuku" — " pierce a mat". For this the Ba-Ronga collect a quantity of solid rushes of at least 3 feet in length, (myriads of them grow in the plains,) and pierce holes through them, all along the rush, at intervals of 3 inches, passing strings through the holes. A net work of string, half an inch wide, is run down the two sides at the edges to prevent fraying. When new, these mats are of a beautiful golden yellow, but the smoke in the huts soon turns them brown. Every Native possesses his own mat, on which he sleeps rolled up in his rug. Women possess two, the old one, used during the menses, and the better one on which she sleeps ordinarily (I. p. 187).

The *string* (ngoti, yin-tin) used for these mats is made as follows: the leaves of the nala palm are picked when very young and tender (nshunya): a knife is passed all along the folioles, in order to remove the green fleshy covering; the parenchyma, composed of very light but tough fibres, (nkwampa), then remains. The workman takes two small bundles ot these fibres and rolls them (yahliya) together with the palm of his hand along his thigh, twisting, intertwining, firmly uniting them, continually adding fresh fibres, as he goes along: in this way he can make a string as long and as thick as he likes.

The following are the technical expressions employed for different kinds of basket-work.

Luka (plaiting) for ntjaba, shihundju, lihlelo, ndjewana, hwama nhalaba, tshala (drying floor), shitlanta (store house).

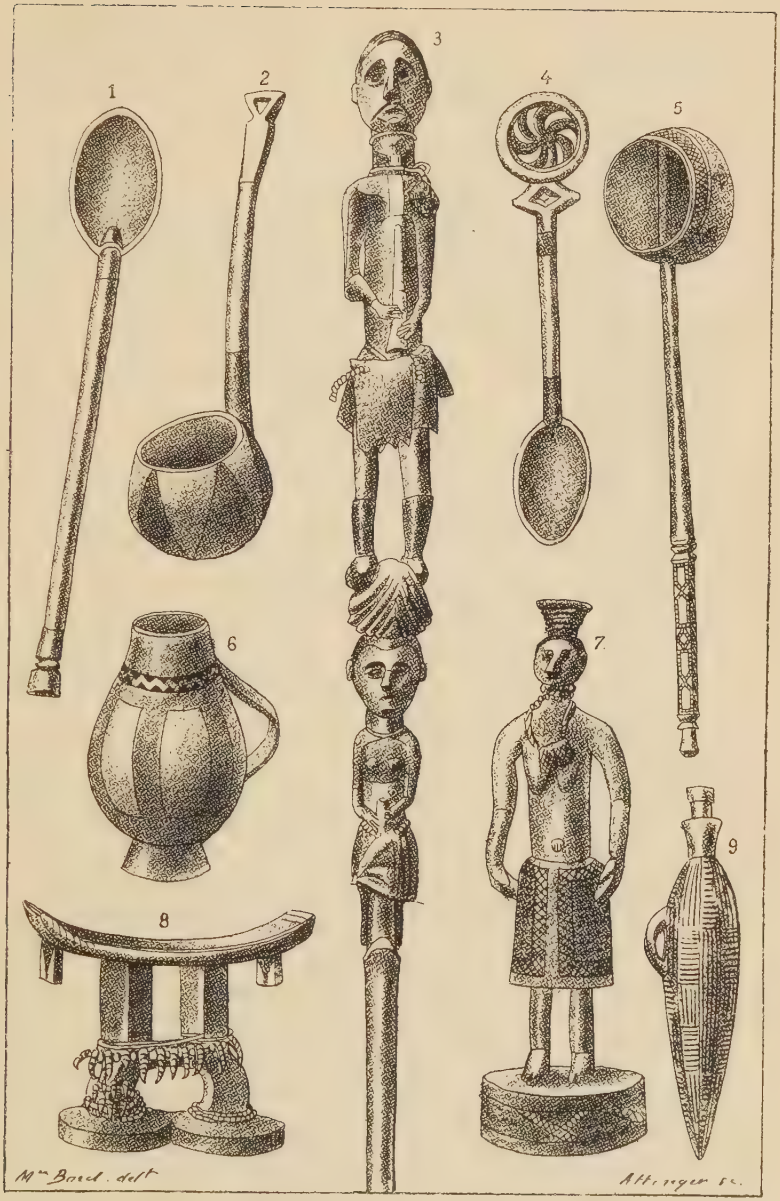
Tlhaba (piercing) for ngula and likuku.

Betsha (tying) for the small *brooms* also made of palm straws (mpsayelo, No 5), and the reed walls (khumbi, dji-ma).

Bangela (making) for the *bunana*, a sort of hammock, made of plaited milala which is hung to the branches of the trees and, sometimes, in summer used for sleeping in, to escape the mosquitoes which swarm inside the huts.

Runga (sewing) for the boats (byatsho, dji-ma). The ancient Native boats built before the appearance of nails, hammers and saws, were made of pieces of wood securely tied together. Some of these antiquitated craft are still to be seen on the Maputju river.

On the rivers up country, boats are frequently made of a large piece of curved bark, bent on both sides, allowing two or three persons to sit together. I crossed the great Letaba on a boat of this description. Such boats are also used for storing water. Where mimale branches (or nervules) are procurable, they are tied together so as to form a raft called *shikhakhafu*. These are used on the Nkomati River, and on the lakes in Ronga territory. Big rafts made of trunks of trees fastened together, and called *magudhlwana*, were used in former times on the sea, when going to meet the White men, the Ba-Godji. (See later.) They are out of use now and there is scarcely one to be found.



Thonga carvings.

(One seventh of the natural size.)

In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques the Natives now build their boats on the European model. The fishermen cut down forked branches, which do duty for ribs, on which they nail planks. They are wonderfully clever at this work, one man, Sam Matlombe, nicknamed the "King of the Bay", being particularly expert at it.

The sewn boats of olden times might well be included under the heading of basket-ware. Those of to-day belong decidedly to another branch of industry, and will afford us a natural point of transition from basket to wooden-ware.

III. *Wood-carving.*

It is the *nkuhlu*, mafureira tree, as we have already seen, that the Natives of these parts use for their wood-carving. If the name of this tree be very hard to pronounce, its wood is, to the same extent, soft and possesses the great advantage of not easily splitting or cracking, when being dried. If Nature had not bestowed on the Thonga this excellent tree, who knows if they would have ever thought of executing the works of art which are depicted in the adjoining illustration!

However before thinking of art, they began by cutting, or fashioning, with their small knives, articles of every day use: *spoons* (nkombe, mu mi) for instance, (see illustrations of carvings, N° 1), made in several sizes: the big one is used for serving out the potful of maize amongst the rightful claimants, and the small one for conveying food to the mouth when hands are ritually soiled (I. p. 145, 190). One often finds really well carved spoons, I give drawings of two of them, particularly interesting; the first shows a sort of spiral, or catherine-wheel decoration at the top of the handle (N° 4); the other, brought by Dr Audeoud from Maputju country, has a carved snake as ornamental motive. Spoons are all ornamented, even the plainest, with designs in black, burnt into the wood with a red-hot iron. For beer, ladles are used, made of a single piece of wood and are generally decorated with large black triangles

(N° 2). In Inhambane and Quelimane, the Natives make them of cocoa nut shells, on which they carve curious geometrical figures (N° 5). *Goblets* (ntcheko, mu-mi) are generally made with a handle. (N° 6).

In the adjoining plate, (p. 114), two spoons are seen hanging to a *chain* made of links carved from nkuhlu wood. This is a wonderful product of Native art. These chains are often met with, especially in the Northern clans, some with links of six inches in length, the whole thing attaining many yards in length. The one here shown is six feet long, with links of only three inches. The special point to be noted in this " objet d'art " is that it has been carved from one piece of wood only and the artist had to succeed from the first : a single mistake, a single slip of the knife, would have broken the whole chain and made it useless. European joiners told me they doubted whether an ordinary work-man would be able to carve such a chain. I was told that these spoon-chains were used by two individuals wanting to make an alliance : they passed the chain over their shoulders and, so united, ate from the same plate. However this is mere play and has no ritual value.

Carved spoon from Maputju country.

Between the two spoons, a kind of *bowl* is seen, almost per-

fectly round and prettily decorated. It was used by a man who had been possessed, and washed his face in it every day to cool his head and appease the spirits. Thonga also carve large dishes,

Carved chain and bowl. (Environs of Lourenço Marques).
(One fifth of the natural size.)

sometimes nicely decorated, though not so nicely as those from the Ba-Rotse of the Zambezi. I possess one of two feet in length, by 10 inches in width. These are used for serving meat.

I must not forget the *mortars* (tshuri, dji-ma) usually made

Thonga kitchen ware. *Phot. H. Gros.*

or mahagony, or of nkanye, and the pestles (musi, mu-mi) made of nkonono. The former are often adorned with triangular carvings.

The same style of decoration is to be seen on the *calabashes* which Natives use as bottles. The calabash, as every one knows, is a sort of gourd composed of two spheres of unequal size with a narrow connection between them. By an ingenious system of supports, placed under the gourd during its growth, Natives succeed in imparting to the upper sphere the shape of an elongated neck. There are many varieties of calabash, some small, furnished with a long projection and used for drawing the bukanye from the large jars. They are specially kept for this use! (See p. 85, N° 7, and also I. p. 373). In Vol. I. p. 48, I have given an illustration, of these bukanye calabashes, called *ntjeko* (mu-mi), very nicely decorated by a Tembe artist. The black designs are burnt in and represent huts, birds, palm trees and, last but not least, two warriors fighting! The white dots are beads inserted in the soft bark of the calabash. The largest calabash on this plate measures 21 inches in length and 7 in width.

Some plainer calabashes are N^{os} 7, 8, 9 of the illustration of ornaments. Others are simply shells of sala (shikutja), (p. 16), with a good sized hole cut in them for an opening (N° 6 and 10); a circular piece, say one third of the other, makes a capital cover; a string passes through the bottom of the calabash and the middle of the cover, fastening the two together. When knotted on top of the latter the *lard tin* is securely closed. We generally thus designate this kind of calabash, for it is in these round balls that is kept the mafureira grease, to which I have previously referred (p. 19). They are hung up in the roof of the hut where they swing to and fro in the smoke and become well browned. The young folks amuse themselves by carving designs on these shells.

The artistic touch is still more striking in the *snuff boxes* (ngulana, yin-tin), carved in ebony, which the chiefs are fond of carrying; the one depicted (p. 111, N°9) came to me from Mavabaze who was, for a time, chief of the Khosa clan. It is also conspicuous in the strange *pillows* (shidamu) on which the Ba-Ronga

rest their heads at night. Let us contemplate this article (N° 8) with the respect it deserves ! It is probably on this description of pillow that primitive humanity in all parts of the world have dreamed their dreams ! We see it sculptured on the Egyptian monuments, above or by the side of princely couches. We find also among the relics of the lake-dwellers stone objects of a similar shape, which were doubtless used for the same purpose. The Bantu has adhered to this piece of prehistoric furniture all through the ages. The specimen in the illustration was bought from a young man, a traveller, on the road : the bird's claws, beads and other articles tied all round it, doubtless hunting trophies, are plainly to be seen. He had the advantage of literally resting on his laurels, and naively believed they would bring him good luck while sleeping.

Mankhelu's stick.

The Thonga artist has even dared to portray the *human form* and the result of his audacity, however grotesque it may be, is not without originality, or even a certain marked style, which may be recognised in all their statuettes. More often they content themselves with carving a man's head, with his crown, at the top of their walking sticks. I here give an illustration of Mankhelu's stick, which was a very old one, dating from 1850, at least, which shows the primitive style without any European influence. Sometimes they carve the whole body from head to foot ; (as grapes do not grow in their country the use of the classic vine-leaf is quite unknown). N° 3 represents a stick with a man and a woman, the one standing on the other's head, the stronger sex treading the weaker under foot ! Large statuettes, of at least one and a half to two feet in height

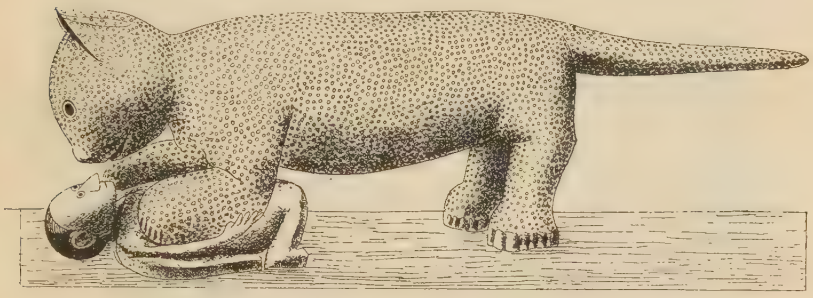
and broad in proportion, are to be seen in the Neuchâtel Ethnographical Museum, which no doubt contains the largest collection of Thonga implements in the world, having been plentifully provided with them by missionaries of French Switzerland. N° 7 is smaller, and represents a woman having on her head

Thonga statuettes.
(One third of the natural size.)

the typical conical basket, the pride of the workers in the fields, and of the cooks. The five small figures on the adjoining plate are very amusing indeed. They were carved by an artist of Movumbi (near Rikatla), who pretended that the man on the right was a Banyan. The other figures are Natives, men with their wax crowns, and the ladula garment (p. 80) adorned with inserted beads; one is a woman carrying a child!

The finest specimen of Native art that I ever saw is the carv-

ing of a *huge panther* about to devour a human being, the work of Muhlati, a sculptor living in the environs of Lourenço Marques. This artist, who was very proud of his work, and asked a tolerably high price for it, claimed to be able to carve anything and everything : birds, four footed beasts, or man. He was famous throughout the land, for his talent. Nothing more quaint than this large spotted creature, (the spots being obtained as usual by burning with a hot iron), planting his claws in the flesh of a man, (an Englishman, as I was told by the inspired author of this group!), and glaring at him with two great round eyes, not very symmetrical! With touching forethought, this



A panther devouring an Englishman.
(One twelfth of the natural size.)

modern Phidias has rendered the posterior half of the tail quite independent of the rest of the animal. A tenon and a circular socket allow the caudal appendage to be so neatly adjusted that the joint is hardly visible. Muhlati told me how the idea of a removable tail had occurred to him. He thought that if ever his masterpiece had to be packed up, and cross the ocean, it would be more easily cased. This can hardly be called the notion of a savage! Besides, the work itself would never have been accomplished had there been no Whites in the country. Evidently the sculptor, indolent like all his race, would not have worked day in and day out, at carving such an animal for a play-thing for his children. He concluded that his talent might well bring him in some money; it was the mercenary consideration that urged him on to the execution of the work, and no

mere love of art ; nevertheless I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shews us to what length the Ba-Ronga sculptural ability can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.

If statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native sculpture, the *canoes* (shene (Dj.)) are the largest I have already

Thonga canoe. *Phot. A. Borel.*

mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahagony and nkwenge trees when used for this purpose (p. 20). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we shall never be able to find out. Tradition has it that the primitive inhabitants of Nondwane, the Hoñwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, knew no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden

times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how, from a species of teak tree called *ntshiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to the iron age. There has certainly been a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony where a great quantity of silex, and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thonga, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in Delagoa Bay by the " Godji " traders, and whale fishers, of whom I shall shortly speak and who were the first White visitors whom Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga were exchanging fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, copper brought by the strangers, and they had found the way of making copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the " Godji ". Later on wrecked boats provided Native smiths with iron to make hoes, axes, etc. In certain villages there were regular forges, (Matlharin, near Mbengelen Island, Matjolo etc.). The hoes were in the well-known form of an ace of spades and were fixed into a wooden handle, as are also the axes, and battle axes (I. p. 427). But the principal supply of iron came from the Transvaal Mountains, especially from the Northern Zoutpansberg, where the Bvesha have practised the art of mining iron ore for an unknown time. These Suto hoes have played a great part in the history of the Thonga tribe, having been extensively used as currency for lobolo purposes.

These Bvesha — this word is said to be a Thonga corruption of Venda — built their furnaces in ant-hills, as shewn in the adjoining illustration taken by M. H. Gros, near Iron Mountain, East of the Spelonken district. They excavated three holes under the furnace, and blew into it by means of bellows made of a skin, the air being expelled through an antelope horn. The ore, broken in small pieces and mixed with charcoal, was melted, crushed, melted a second time, crushed again and made into hoes and axes, etc. Who had taught the Venda their art?

Did they learn it from the Malemba, that curious tribe, half Semitic in its customs, who invaded the Northern Transvaal during the XVIII^th century ? Nobody knows for certain. I am under the impression that this art is older than that, as the Lebombo Natives, who invaded the Nondwane in the XVI^th century, seem to have possessed iron weapons. The origin of iron and the date of its introduction in South Africa is still a mystery.

Among the ornaments illustrated will be found a very pretty belt (N° 1). It is the work of a young man named Philemon, living in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, who employed his leisure moments in making objects of this description with twisted wires of iron, brass and copper, bent in festoons and fastened with small tongues of metal. European suggestion is doubtless very marked in these belts, but still they possess a certain cachet. Amongst Zulus as in our tribe, large cups of various descriptions, egg-cups are manufactured, and it is evident that, in this branch, Native art is capable of considerable development. Their method of fastening blades of assagais to their handles with iron wire is also very ingenious. Sometimes they cover their ebony sticks from top to bottom with a delicate network of steel and brass wire. A Native expert in wire work once mended the stock of my sporting gun, which was broken, and made a wonderful job of it. This wire, that is so largely used for bracelets, was formerly made by Native blacksmiths, but now they buy it at Lourenço Marques or from the Hindu traders

D. COMMERCE

Thonga have a natal inclination for trade and have always been addicted to it. Before there was question of any currency, when hoes were not yet procurable, nor the *ritlatla* bracelet brought from the Whites (I. p. 359), or the copper stick called *lirale* (1) melted by the Palaora Ba-Suto, they knew

(1) Compare my article in Folklore, 24 June 1903.

Phot. H. Gros.

Native Ironfoundry in Zoutpansberg

how to buy (shaba) and to sell (shabisa), viz., to exchange their primitive produce. A mat was bartered for a fowl and the thrifty savage thought : " This is good business : the hen will lay eggs, and hatch chickens and this will bring me a profit (bindjula) ". A shihundju basket was also exchanged for a hen. Another way of buying was adopted when dealing with pots : the pot was filled with mealies by the buyer and the contents left to the potter as corresponding to the value of the pot. For monkey-nuts, not husked, the pot had to be filled twice ; or for more precious products, such as sorghum and Kafir corn, half of it only was measured out. I have still seen some transactions of this kind amongst Shiluvane people. Should the pot break when first used, the potter had to give another one in its place.

But this primitive trade became much more serious when the Whites made their appearance. Delagoa Bay has been one of the first spots visited and occupied by Europeans in South Africa, and a considerable Native trade developed there in the XVIth century, according to Portuguese documents. These Portuguese records show that, as far back as 1545, Lourenço Marques and Antonio Caldeira made a commercial exploration of the Bay and tried to establish regular exchanges with the Natives. These relations were not continuous, but in 1650 there were five factories in the vicinity of Delagoa, on the island of Inyak, at Sheffin, on the Nkomati (Manhissa) and on both sides of the Bay. In 1721 the Dutch settled there and remained for fourteen years. The Austrians also stationed a garrison on Inyak Island in 1781, but this stronghold was destroyed by a Portuguese frigate. Since the beginning of the XIXth century the Portuguese occupation has been more continuous. The only reason for Whites settling at Delagoa was, of course, the opportunity of traffic with the Natives, and the presence of foreigners has doubtless stimulated a certain commercial development among the Ba-Ronga and the tribes of the interior. This is, at any rate, asserted by a Portuguese who visited Lourenço Marques at the end of the XVIIIth century, and wrote an account of his impressions to Don F. Amaro de

San Thomé, Prelate of Mozambique. His descriptions may appear somewhat highly coloured, to those who know the localities, but I quote the following passages which bear upon our subject:

" On the Southern shore of the Bay resides King Capella (a sirname bestowed by the Portuguese on the Royal family of Tembe) who is now known as Antonio, (perhaps the Muhari of the Natives). He is very powerful, and has always with him a merchant who trades in ivory... To the North of the river is our factory, where we have a fort and as many as 170 soldiers. The King of Matolla (Matjolo) is very powerful, and well supplied with all necessaries. His village consists of over 400 huts. (This probably means all the villages of the country collectively). It is here that the inhabitants of the mountains bring for sale gold and copper and ivory, for which they have to pay dues. This Monarch owns a province called Cherinda (Shirindja). He obtains from it quantities of ivory... I saw in the house of the King of Maouote (Mabota) two large chests full of amber. About thirty or forty days journey up the river (Nkomati) dwells the Grand Caxa (Cacha, doubtless Khosa, in the country of Khosene), who is a kind of emperor. It is here that all trading vessels come. (1) He dispenses hospitality to all the merchants who wish to buy ivory, gold, rhinoceros horns, hippopotamus' teeth, or copper, articles which they obtain very particularly cheaply. A great number of negroes from the kingdom of Quitève (not far from Beira) come down from the mountains to this village for purposes of barter. They bring a large quantity of gold... The Grand Caxa and his people are in continual relations with the Imperialists (the Austrians who occupied the Bay in 1781), who make large profits out of them. Every month two or three vessels, laden with black clothing and glass ware, arrive here for traffic with the Natives. These two rivers (the Maputju and the Nkomati) can supply each year, from my observation, sufficient ivory, gold, rhinoceros horns and hippopotamus' teeth to load more than twelve ships... All the shore of the Bay is thickly inhabited with people who transact a large business in amber, and go to sell it to the King Matolla, Maouote and to the Grand Caxa. "

(1) These ships, it must be understood, were in all probability, very small craft carrying at the most about five tons of merchandise. During the greater part of the year it is impossible to ascend the Nkomati higher than Magule (where the river forms an elbow) with anything drawing two feet of water.

This description, perhaps somewhat extravagant, proves that in the XVIIIth century the Ba-Ronga were doing a considerable trade.

It is interesting, in view of these White records, to note what Natives themselves remember regarding their trade in former times. According to them, the first White people they dealt with did not dare come to the shore. They were whale-fishers and gave the Makaneta people whale flesh to eat. The Ba-Ronga used to go and meet them in the Bay, on rafts built with stems of trees tied together (p. 110). They said: "We go to Godji" ; *Godji* meant that kind of trade. Blacks and Whites could not understand each other. However, the trade was not "silent trade", as has been the case in other quarters. They managed to communicate by gestures, and Natives obtained mainly metals from these sailors, the brass ritlatla, iron hoes, pieces of copper which they made into wire, etc. Who were these strangers ? Natives cannot say for certain, but think that they were Englishmen, as the name *Ba-Godji* is still commonly applied by them to English people. After these Whites, Natives remember the arrival of the Moslems, who came with their "vessels with an elevated tail", (even to-day Arab dhows have a raised stern answering this description), called *mapangayi* and were the first to land and to undertake a regular commercial exploitation of the country. They soon learnt to speak with the Natives, and to make use of them in their trade, sending them far away in the interior to barter ivory and skins against hoes, beads, clothing, and, later on, powder and bullets.

Whatever may have been the order of arrival of these strangers, one fact is certain: the Ba-Ronga of Delagoa Bay have acted as intermediaries between the Whites and the tribes in the interior for a considerable time, the Mpfumo-Nondwane, Mabota and Hlanganu (1) Natives being particularly engaged

(1) The people of Hlanganu, neighbours of Nwamba, were renowned as commercial travellers. Hence their nickname: "Ba ku hlomula fumo ba tlhaba misaba." — "Those who take the assagai and pierce the earth." They used their weapon not for fighting but for pacific purposes: the assagai

in this trade, and going as far as Mosapa (Ba-Ndjao country) and Bvesha (Ba-Venda country), to exchange goods.

The *commercial journeyings*, though they are now a thing of the past, are well remembered by the old people, with all the particular customs accompanying them. The Ba-Suto called these travellers *Makwapa* (Thonga pronunciation of *Magwamba*), perhaps from the name of a Thonga chief who dwelt on the Oliphant (see Grammaire Ronga, p. 21), or near Inhambane. The company, called *mpfhumba*, was generally led by a *ndjilashi*, viz, "the master of the expedition", to whom the Banyan entrusted goods for barter. This man had to find a certain number of carriers, who would share in the profits of the venture. The Banyans estimated the value of the goods in pounds sterling. Should the whole be worth £ 60, for instance, he put 60 mealie cobs into a trunk and the ndjilashi did the same in his own hut; on reaching home again, he had to deliver to the Banyan money or skins or whatever he had sold the goods for, to the value of £ 60; and, in case of disagreement, the 60 cobs were counted again in corroboration of the contract made. Should he bring an elephant's tusk, the Banyan gave him the value of a full lobolo. Carriers received two pieces of calico as reward.

After having visited Kimberley, in 1870, some Thonga, having begun to better understand the advantages of trading, tried to undertake such expeditions on their own account. But they soon gave up the experiment as the Ngoni of Muzila often robbed them of all their goods. When they were working for White men, the Ngoni were afraid to pillage the company; on the other hand, if perchance there was loss, it concerned the White merchant. So they preferred the system of trading for the White men.

These travelling companies had to observe many taboos in order to succeed in their expeditions. First of all the *travellers' taboos*. There are three curious taboos to mention in connection with

served as a walking stick in their commercial journeyings. Another version is this: " Ba shaba ndlela ", — " they buy the road ", they do not fight, they would rather pay to be allowed to pass (I. p. 335).

any journeyings : a traveller must not *take salt* with him when he goes, either to pay a visit, or to hunt, or on a business trip, else he will not succeed in his object; he must avoid *sharpening assagais* on the road; this would rouse his enemies and "awaken thorns" on the path ; he must take care *not to pluck milala leaves*, those used for weaving baskets: it would be an insult to the people on whom he is calling. Let him cut those leaves when returning, or else he will find trouble in the village to which he goes, lamentations, shoutings, disgusting sights.

Morover, in order "to keep the road clean" (basisa ndlela) the traveller must also beware of the *mampfana bird*, a kind of crane called "the preventer of the voyage" (sibaliyendjo (Ro.), shitshinyariendjo (Dj.). Should that bird fly across the road, opening wide its wings, this would be enough to make the party return home: there was danger of death before them! The flesh of this bird is used in the preparation of the charms taken by travellers. This is why it comes to warn them if the road is not "clean". (Viguet).

There are several popular songs which the traders used to sing on the road, or which were sung about them. One of these has been already quoted (p. 86). Here is another in which the tired carriers ask their leader to allow them to return home:

Hoho ! hoho ! maringele wa mamano !
Hoho ! hoho ! dla nkambana hi muka !
Hulukati ya ndlopfu yi nga siyi ñwana !

Oho ! Oho ! Thou who leadest us as a mother !
Oho ! Oho ! Break the platter and let us go home !
The female-elephant never forsakes her young !

The company generally consisted of men only. However the allusion to the female elephant might mean that there were sometimes also women amongst them, They address the leader of the expedition, asking him to destroy the platter so that no utensils be left in which to prepare food, thus necessitating a return home. Besides they are thinking of their little ones left behind in the village, as it is unnatural to be separated so long. The mother elephant never forsakes her little one!

On their way back, they had carefully to watch a certain bird called *hwati*, fish-eater ; if that bird flew away in the right direction, homeward, it was a hopeful sign. If it emitted its cry *Kwe-kweru-kweru*, (kweru means at home), if it settled on the crown of a hut, then the travellers were happy and shouted their joyful *mikulungwane*. On the contrary, should any member of the company have died on the road, another bird would come and perch on the crown, the *magudjwana*, with a tired look, letting its head fall forward... Then there were tears instead of shouts of joy !

These great commercial expeditions were superseded later on by the *trade in skins* which the Ba-Ronga conducted, bartering them in the interior for powder or other European produce. I knew one Native who organised regular expeditions to Bilene, where he bought skins of civet-cats with which the Zulu warriors delight to deck themselves. Thence he went into the hill country of the Swazis, or Zulus, to sell his merchandise. It was reported that he obtained scores of oxen in exchange for his precious nsimba skins. The last time, however, the venture did not turn out well, and it has not been attempted again.

Native trade, thirty years ago, consisted also in selling *wax*, and *rubber*, and tons of *nkampfi* (mafureira almonds) to the business houses at Delagoa, (the supply of ivory was exhausted years ago), but this trade has fallen off almost entirely. My impression is that Native commerce has greatly diminished during the last thirty years. So the fact is evident that civilisation, which had at first given a real impetus to the commercial spirit of the Thonga, has latterly almost entirely destroyed their trade. How has this been done ?

A first reason for this decrease in Native commerce may be found in the advent of a large number of Asiatics, Banyans from Goa and Bombay, who are past masters in the art of shopkeeping, and who set up in business wherever they consider there is a sufficient population to warrant the venture. Living very cheaply (rice and curry being their staple food), in any kind of shanty, selling at enormous profits, keen at making bargains, these people monopolise the retail trade throughout

the country and the Natives are quite unable to meet the competition : they have consequently almost entirely given up all their earlier attempts at business transactions! (1)

A second reason explaining why the trade of former days has almost entirely disappeared is to be found in the *great economic changes* resulting from the fact that Lourenço Marques has become an important seaport, in close relation with the miners of Johannesburg who receive their supplies in transit via Delagoa Bay. Thousands of Natives are employed in discharging the large steamers which arrive by hundreds in the roadstead. At this work a Native can earn fifteen shillings a week; in a short time he has made ample provision for the wants of his family

(1) I made, on one occasion, in 1892, a list of various articles displayed for sale, in and around a Banyan shop, in the district of Mahazule (to the North of Nondwane). This is what Mr. Nala, a Hindu from Goa established for many years amongst the Ronga, offered to the Natives living in the neighbourhood of his primitive store.

Stuffs. These are sold by measurement taken on the individual; say, by the *shikumba,* length of one arm, or by the *nkumba* or *bemba* (two arms), or by the *peça,* the entire piece, the equivalent of two bemba. The materials most in demand are called ; *tingidao* (white), *mashita* (black with white stripes), *shilandana* (all red), *shinwakana* (red and black), *mempana* (a special red stuff worn as mourning) and *malopa* (a navy blue material still more frequently worn as mourning). Besides these are *handkerchiefs* (minturu) of various colours, principally red, a large proportion coming from manufacturers of East Switzerland; white *blankets (gampongo,* meaning snow), for three or four shillings ; coloured blankets, thicker, varying from five to seven shillings; towels, called *thawula* (an adaptation of the English word) and even some articles of ready-made clothing such as *djansi* (overcoats) at fifteen shillings! Amongst the stuffs I should more particularly note the *gangisa ntombi*, that is " for use when courting the girls ",dark blue with a white flower pattern.

Beads. There are at least a dozen kinds to be found at Nala's ; djiridja black) mbanda (white), shingazana, shimuzana, nkankana, habo, matshimbarole, bafa, tshambo.

Sundries. Rings, fish-hooks, buttons (masowa), thread, needles, snuff boxes to be carried in the ears (tinhlanga), knives, spoons, balls of string, padlocks (makandjate) with key attached ; little chains, to be hung from the belt, which tinkle when walking; bracelets (busenga, ten for a shilling); wooden spoons, combs, coils of fine iron wire ; skins ; a large trap for catching hyenas or other wild animals ; small brass petroleum lamps ; sardines at sixpence a tin, English biscuits, and finally, last but not least, a cask of German brandy diluted (tempora) with 50 % of water ! This would now be replaced by three casks of Vinho colonial, one of white wine, one of red wine and one of I do not know what colour !

and no longer finds it necessary to go to Bilene, to Zulu land or Swaziland to make a living. The women too can make money by selling tomatoes and sweet potatoes to an ever increasing White population. All this is much easier than collecting mafureira, wax or tapping trees for rubber. (1)

Moreover the fashion of going to the *Transvaal mines*, to earn money, has become so universal that a Thonga would think he was wanting in something if he had not made a stay in town (shilungu). There, in Johannesburg, they earn £ 3 in the mines, £ 4 or 5 monthly as kitchen boys; so they despise the old primitive trading expeditions which brought less money and were attended with more danger.

These new economic circumstances not only discourage Natives to trade on their own account, reducing them more and more to the condition of mere hired labourers, but are rapidly destroying their so picturesque and interesting industry. For a few shillings they can buy European utensils. Their nicely carved spoons are replaced by ugly tin ones; their wooden tumblers by less artistic enamelled ones, their primitive plates by European ware decorated with doubtful taste. Instead of the piece of reed which they carried in the ear as a snuff box, they now buy brass cartridges, and the Thonga beauties, discarding the *tihuhlu* fat, now anoint themselves with a scented oil imported from Europe. There may be certain advantages

(1) There are at least two species of shrubs whose sap, when hardened, produces excellent rubber. These are fairly wide-spread and M. Dewèvre, a Belgian botanist, who has made a special study of the rubber plants, and to whom I sent leaves and fruits of the trees, has classified them with the Landolphia. One is said to be a Landolphia Petersiana, and the other a variety of the Landolphia Kirki (Dyer) called by others Landolphia Monteiroi. Natives make an incision in the bark of the tree, and a milky sap exudes, which soon thickens and the somewhat sticky filaments are then wound round small sticks. A good yield of rubber could undoubtedly be obtained in this country if the trees were cultivated and tapped in an intelligent manner.

(With regard to the name of the rubber tree compare Delagoa Bay, its Natives and Natural History, London, Philip and Son, 1891, written by Mrs Monteiro, an Englishwoman who spent several years in Lourenço Marques and published interesting observations on the country. Without claiming any great scientific accuracy, this volume affords much interesting information.)

in these changes, but the picturesqueness of Bantu life promptly disappears, together with the incentive to develop their Native arts and crafts !

E. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON NATIVE INDUSTRY

It is a strange destiny, that of these African races amongst whom the civilisation of the XIXth century has appeared, effecting the most radical changes in mind and manners of people who, for centuries, perhaps for tens of centuries, have remained in the same primitive condition, marking time, so to speak, on the same spot, or, at most, progressing almost imperceptibly. The transformation would seem to be as rapid as the previous immobility was fixed.

Let us try to discover the causes which may account for this extraordinary stagnation.

All are agreed in bearing witness to the fact that the state of civilisation, in which Europeans found the Bantu tribes of South Africa, is of extremely ancient date. It is true that we have but little historical data to go upon as regards the development of these people, but, nevertheless, it seems to me highly probable that the shape of their ngula, their hwama, their shirundju, their pillows, the construction of their huts, date from a very remote antiquity, and have been handed down unchanged from generation to generation. How to account for their absence of development, whilst the Indo-European races, starting probably from similar primitive conditions, have advanced to so high a degree of civilisation as that of the Greeks and Romans, and ultimately to that of modern times ?

The reply given by many casual observers to this question is that *the Bantu races are incapable of progress.* They are condemned, by reason of their psychical constitution, to vegetate in perpetual barbarism or to make themselves ridiculous by a servile imitation of the superior races. This thesis is not justified by the facts of the case. We recognise a relatively mental inferiority in the Thonga, as in their congeneric Bantu, but nevertheless their minds possess, in a more or less rudimentary state, all those faculties of which we are wont to boast. During the several years I have passed in close contact with these intelligences, supposed to be so limited, I have been more often struck with the points of analogy between the Africans and ourselves than by the differences which separate us. Besides, it is an error to

assert that they have not progressed. Their inventive genius is fully proved by the various ways in which the several tribes have taken advantage of the materials with which Nature has supplied them. The Ba-Ronga do not make their baskets as do the Zulus, or the Ba-Suto. Again, in many separate instances, we can note a distinct forward movement in their industry : the arrival of glass beads, one or two hundred years ago, gave birth to an entirely new and original decorative art ; during the last century, the contest with a tribe better

Phot. Dentan.

Manual work at the Lemana Training School (Northern Transvaal).

clothed than themselves led them to adopt another and a more decent, costume. (Compare «Introduction à la Grammaire ronga» § XXXI). When copper and brass wire became procurable, they not only made pretty bracelets, but they invented quite a new art, weaving belts (p. 85, N° 1), egg-cups, cups of various forms very different from those of European make.

The ability of the Native to progress in industry cannot be doubted when one sees the results of the industrial teaching they receive in many Missionary Institutions. The Swiss Romande Missionaries have

introduced, in their schools, the manufacture of baskets and mats with the materials found in the country, and the experiment was altogether in favour of the intelligence of the Natives, as shown in the adjoining illustration. One of the pupils of Shilùvane even invented a new form of basket, made with a single leaf of a big palm tree (mpfuñwana) growing in the Leydsdorp plain. In those institutions where carpentering and waggon building are scientifically taught, results are very satisfactory, and I myself saw in Lovedale, a splendid American desk, which had been made entirely by a Native, and was as perfect as if it had been manufactured by an European craftsman. So the industrial stagnation of the South African tribes must not be put down to an innate incapacity for progress. I think we must look elsewhere for its causes, and, without pretending to exhaust the question, I will proceed to enumerate the reasons, which, to my mind, explain the exceedingly slow development of those tribes.

Their *political system, social and religious*, is one of the chief causes of this state of things. The deceased chiefs are the gods of the nation. That which they did is that which should be done now : their lives are the supreme examples to be followed : the traditions bequeathed by ancestors are the only religious and moral light which these people possess. Customs, handed down from prehistoric times, are law. No one would think of emancipation therefrom. To do otherwise than others do, *psa yila*, is forbidden. It would be a denial of the divine authority of the ancestors, and a danger to the tribe. This principle is the most strictly maintained in such tribe as is the most free from foreign admixture and the least exposed to outside influences. In the Khosen country, for example, when an evangelist trained in Spelonken, Yosefa, wanted to build a square house, he was hindered from doing so. It was against the law. How could he expect to live in a hut of a different shape to those his forefathers had inhabited ? Had there been no Whites in the country, Yosefa would have found it impossible to build a house to his liking ! This is a typical case of the immobility of Native industry. (1)

But in giving as a reason for this immobility the all-powerful sway

(1) The lack of imagination in these races seems specially noticeable in mechanics, and it has been remarked that South African Natives have not yet invented a single machine. This may be true. However, I heard attested by a Johannesburg technician that Thonga had a real aptitude for running engines and a real bent for mechanics. As not one of them ever studied advanced mathematics, no wonder they have not invented new machines.

of customs, supported and maintained by the national authorities, we have only pushed the difficulty further back. How has it been possible to maintain such a system of oppression? How is it that no stronger minded individuals have arisen to throw off this yoke and gain liberty of action, stirring up, in spite of itself, the tribe dormant, like an organism with blood congealed! Amongst our own races, men of genius, great thinkers, have, from earliest times, known how to impress their new ideas upon the masses, and lead them eventually, however recalcitrant, upon the march of progress. We will have to content ourselves with two considerations which may help to solve the problem.

Our civilisation is the result of a combination of millions of minds and hundreds of peoples. The lake-dweller, of the stone-age, was not much more developed than the actual Black of South Africa: in some respects he was less so. But he inhabited Europe, and, to the South of that Continent, stretched an inland sea, a Mediterranean, which spreads out its many arms, gulfs and bays, reaching to the very hearts of the countries on its shores, and thus facilitating access between Nation and Nation. Every new discovery by one soon became the property of its neighbour. Rome inherited from Greece, and Greece from Egypt and Abyssinia, and these international relations, favoured by the geographical conditions of the Old World, explain the development, *the arithmetical progression* shall we call it? of our Indo-European civilisation. In Africa, nothing of the sort. Few, if any, gulfs or bays in this Continent, whose coasts are hopelessly unbroken and inhospitable. Many a long stretch of river, otherwise navigable, is closed to navigation by impassable cataracts. Deserts of burning sand separate the tribes one from another, and sometimes they are isolated by veritable ramparts of lofty mountains. Communications are almost impossible, and the Black tribe, left to its own resources, amidst natural surroundings of an enervating description, remains stationary and content with the elementary industry to which it has attained. *Outside influence is wanting* to stimulate the intellectual energy, the inventive faculty of which they possess the germs.

Beyond all this a second factor is noticeable in the course of human development, and this, while all in favour of the Indo-European races, accentuates still more forcibly the differences between the several branches of the human family. Through the centuries the Egyptian hieroglyphs slowly evolved into ideographic signs, which eventually gave place to the phonetic alphabet of the Phenicians. This *alphabet*

goes forth to conquer the world, and to put a fresh aspect on things generally. These twenty to thirty letters of which the Blacks had not the slightest notion, these signs, thanks to which stone, wood and paper have been made to speak, will henceforward allow great minds to transmit their thoughts direct to their fellow-men. The knowledge of one epoch will then be passed on intact to following generations, whilst, formerly, ideas were frequently lost or distorted by popular tradition; progression will henceforth be not merely *arithmetical* but *geometrical*. The *book* will be the accumulator in which the intellectual forces of the race will be stored, for the future transmission, without wastage, prolific of light and incentive, to every sphere of human activity. The Blacks of South Africa have never invented any system of writing. The idea of representing an object, a number, a thought, or a sound by any conventional sign, seems never to have occurred to them. Makhani, Muzila's old counsellor, did not know his own age. He probably thought, in common with many of his contemporaries, that he was, at least, ten years old. One day, I said to him : " Why didn't you go each year, when the leaves begin to appear on the trees, and make some kind of a mark on the bark of a nkuhlu ? Then, to-day, you might have counted all the marks and you would know how old you are ! " He laughed and considered the idea futile, absurd ! The absence of any system of writing is, doubtless, the proof of a certain intellectual inferiority, but environment may easily account for the illiterate condition of Natives. In fact it is environment which is the chief cause of their centuries-long stagnation.

It would, however, be doing a wrong to these people, were we to judge them solely by the absence of industrial progress. Mental activity is not only manifested in the manufacture of machinery or in transactions of high finance. Man is a being endowed with thought and speech. Speech and literature, reflecting thoughts, are phases of human activity more essential than industrial undertakings. The Thonga, in common with their neighbours the Ba-Suto and the Zulus, do surely possess a literature, although they have no system of writing and may be classed as illiterates ; of this fact I shall furnish abundant proof when treating of their *literary and artistic life*.

FIFTH PART

THE LITERARY AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Ethnography does not merely consist in the description of customs and rites. Under the manifold manifestations of the Life of the Tribe, the ethnographer tries to discover its soul... The more we proceed in our study, the nearer we approach the mystery of its psychic life.

The psychic life reveals itself in two great sets of spiritual facts, those relating to the intellectual and those relating to the religious and moral side of life ; in other words, the mind of a nation can be considered under two different aspects : the intellectual, and the moral and religious. We have not yet gone far enough to come to any conclusion as regards the Religion and Morality of the Native soul, but we can already attempt to describe the main characteristics of the Native intellect.

CHAPTER I

Characteristics of the Bantu Intellect

I intend here, briefly, to give the results of the study of the language : the language of a nation being one of the most trustworthy and complete manifestations of its mind.

I have had the audacity to speak of the *Bantu*, and not only of the *Thonga* intellect, because the grammatical features of all the Bantu languages are so similar that conclusions drawn from

one of them apply to most of the tribes, *mutatis mutandis*. At any rate Suto, Zulu, Chopi, Venda, Thonga are very much akin, as regards their structure, forming as they do the South Eastern group of Bantu languages; and, though the Central or Western groups differ on certain points, it may be asserted that the Bantu dialects present a remarkable uniformity.

My aim is not, by any means, to go into a grammatical study. This has been done for most of our South African languages, and the linguist who wishes to learn Thonga can use the Grammaire Ronga, or the Elementary Thonga-Shangaan Grammar already referred to. Leaving aside any technicalities, I now only wish to show what the language reveals as regards the Bantu intellect. Let us, on this important question, take the testimony of the Noun, the Verb, the Syntax and the Adverb.

A. THE NOUN. THE POWER OF CLASSIFICATION

The Bantu system of Nouns shows that the Bantu intellect possesses the *Power of classification*. All the nouns are distributed in a certain number of classes or genders, seven or eight in the South Eastern group, as many as ten in the Central groups; these classes are known by their singular and plural prefixes which are very similar in all dialects. What is the system of classification which these Genders denote? The Indo-German languages divide the objects of Nature into two categories, male and female, and, in most cases, add a third category, the neuter. These are *sex-denoting* languages, as Bleek used to call them. Nothing of the kind is met with amongst the Bantu. (1) They follow an entirely different system. As a matter of fact, it is very

(1) The Thonga, however, possesses a feminine suffix *ati* (eti, etsi) corresponding to a feminine prefix *mi* (I. p. 15.). This suffix is found in nsati, wife, rarakati, paternal aunt, hulukati, female elephant, hweti, moon, nyeleti, star, mati (?) water, etc. It appears in many names of rivers: Nkomati, Ñwebeti, Ñwanetsi, Selati, Nfoloti, Shingwedzi, etc. Other names of rivers belong to the li tin class: Limbelule (Oliphant) Limpopo, Lisuthu, Letsitele (Ritshindjele), Ritabi (Great Tabie), etc.

difficult to understand it fully. These languages have already undergone a long evolution, and, just as it is impossible to state why a French word like "*chemin*" is masculine and another word like *route* is feminine, so the reason why such and such a noun belongs to such and such a class is not always apparent. However, as a whole, the Bantu system of classification is much more reasonable than the Indo-German one. I do not study it etymologically, viz., by searching the original meaning of prefixes, a work which is very delicate and which has been accomplished by Prof. Meinhof, who had at his disposal an enormous quantity of material for comparison. I only consider it in its broad features, as it presents itself now, in the living language, and I assert that it reveals a true power of classification.

The Bantu mind distributes the objects of Nature into seven or eight categories :

1) *The Personal beings*, which are classified by the prefixion of *mu* (n) in the singular and *ba* in the plural, thus forming a first class, the class *mu-ba* ; munhu, man, nuna, husband, nsati, wife, etc. This class is so clearly defined in the Bantu mind that new objects bearing the character of persons are immediately incorporated with it : e. g. mulungu, White man, muhanu, White woman (from an Indian word). Animals acting as sensible beings in folk tales are also transported from their class into the mu-ba class by prefixing *Ñwa* before their names, and numberless verbal nouns are formed by prefixing *mu* to the verbal stem, if they designate persons (e. g. ku fa, to die, mufi, the dead man).

2) The second class, *mu-mi*, designates *trees* ; almost all the trees belong to it (I. p. 369), and those recently introduced into the country have been named according to that rule, e. g. manga, mimanga, the mango tree. It is true that we find a number of other things with the prefix of the tree-class : the wind (moya), and similar objects (mumu, heat, ndjilo, fire, mpfuka, space, nkari, time), the body (miri) and some of its organs (nomo, the lip, nenge, the leg). But trees are the characteristic element of this class.

3) The third class, *yin-tin* (Zulu in-izin, Suto (n)-li) is evi-

dently that of the *animals*. Ninety per cent belong to it; and though a number of other objects have these prefixes (different degrees of affinity for instance : namu, ndjisana, etc., I, p. 220), this is certainly the animal class.

4) The fourth class (*dji-ma* (Ro.), *ri-ma* (Dj.), Zulu : ili-ama, Suto : le-ma) is that of *fruits*, and new fruits are constantly incorporated in it (e. g. malalandji, oranges). Many other categories of objects are found in this class : natural objects, hard, shining (pala, skull; rambu, bone; fumu, thlari, assagai; dambu, sun) and things grouped together. It may be that the prefix *ma* originally applied to objects conveying the idea of duality (mahlo, eyes; mabele, breasts; maboko, arms; mahahla, twins); but in the present state of the language the fruits seem to me to be the characteristic feature of this class.

5) The fifth class (*lin-tin* (Ro.), *ri-tin* (Dj.), ulu-izi (Zulu) is most difficult to define and seems to have a tendency to become obsolete : it is wanting in Suto, and nearly so in Djonga. I call it the class of *organs*, at any rate of organs of an elongated form (lidjimi, tongue; libambo, rib; likhongotlo, spine, etc.). The primitive idea may be that of length.

6.7.8) The sixth, seventh and eighth classes bear a strong neuter character: the sixth (*bu-ma*, Zulu ubu-ama, Suto bo-ma) designates *abstract notions* derived from adjectives or verbs (bukulu, greatness), the seventh (*shi-psi*, Zulu isi-izi, Suto se-li) *instruments* and the eighth (*ku*, Zulu uku, Suto hu) *actions*. This is the verbal class, the infinitive of the verb, ku famba meaning the march as well as to march.

The class bu-ma might also be called the class of *liquids*, as most liquids belong to it (bukanyi, buputju, etc. See I. p. 369).

Considering the principal meaning of these eight classes, we can state that, whatever may be the origin of the prefixes, the actual Bantu, at any rate the Thonga, classify the objects of Nature into : Personal beings, trees, animals, fruits, organs, liquids, abstract notions, instruments, actions, other objects being incorporated with one or another of these classes in a more or less arbitrary way.

That this is a true classificatory system, every one speaking

one of those languages will be able to testify : instinctively one incorporates new objects into the fitting class, or one uses the prefixes in the formation of new words according to their classifying value. The power of classification of the Bantu mind is certainly not inferior to that of the Aryans.

B. THE VERB AND THE POWER OF COMBINATION

The Bantu verb has no inflexion ; Bantu languages belong to the agglutinative variety, viz., they express the various tenses, and moods of the verb not by a change of the root, but by the addition of verbal elements, either prefixed or suffixed. But these additions are so rich, they can express such delicate ideas, that the student of Bantu languages stands amazed at the powers of combination which they reveal. It is impossible here to prove this assertion by technical examples, but I can declare that any one conversant with the use of these verbal principles is able to express all ideas which are conveyed by the conjugation of inflective verbs and a good many more. It is no exaggeration to speak of the thousands of combinations of the Bantu conjugation.

To illustrate the power of combination of the Bantu mind, I need only refer the linguist to the wonderful set of verbal derivatives which are to be found. Take the simple form *ku bona*, to see. You can derive from it the passive *boniwa*, to be seen; two qualificatives, *boneka* and *bonakala*, to be visible; the applicative *bonela*, to see for somebody else, to take care of; the causative, *bonisa*, to cause somebody to see; the intensive, *bonisisa*, to see perfectly well; the reciprocal, *bonana*, to see each other; the reflexive, *tibona*, to see one self. There is still to be mentioned the reversive, as *pakula*, to unload (from pakela, to load). All these various derivations can combine according to given laws, each adding its own meaning to the others. So, from *ku tira*, to work, you can form *tirelana*, the applicative reciprocal, to serve each other, *tireriwa*, applicative passive, to be served, *tirisiwa*, to be made to work, etc. An endless number of combinations is thus rendered possible.

C. SYNTAX AND THE POWER OF CO-ORDINATION

The Bantu mind proceeds by co-ordinating ideas rather then subordinating them to each other.

This appears clearly when studying conjunctions. There are very few subordinative conjunctions. For instance, our "in order to" is rendered by *letsaku*, that is to say, or *akuba*, to be. Ex.: Mu nyike mali *letsaku* a tishabela psa-ku-da, give him money *that is to say* or *to be* he buys food for himself. *If* and *when* are both rendered by *loko*, which is but a demonstrative pronoun of the neuter class *ku*. But this power of co-ordination is extremely large and gives the language a remarkable clearness. Its main feature is this achievement: the prefix of the noun is used to form all the adjectives and pronouns in connection with it, as will be clearly seen from the following sentence:

*Ti*ndlopfu le*ti*nyingi *ta* tiko *ti* khalutile: hi *to*ne
The elephants numerous of the land they have passed: It is they,
hi *to*le*ti*, le'*ti* bonekaka mutjwen wa *to*ne.
it is these which are visible in the forest of them.

This is what grammarians have called the Euphonic concord. It is certainly *euphonic* bringing about frequent alliterations which are pleasing to the ear, and at any rate prevent miscomprehension, helping to understand, at once, to which noun the pronouns and adjectives refer.

D. ADVERBS AND THE POWER OF DESCRIPTION

Adverbs of place, of manner, of time, etc., are very interesting to study; they show the presence of remnants of the three locative classes, *pa*, *mu* and *ku*, which are still flourishing in Central African languages, and have become obsolete in those of South Africa (handle, outside; hansi, on the ground; hase, on the other border; mundjuku, to morrow; kaya, at home; etc.) and this seems to prove that our dialects represent a further development of the old Bantu languages. But I here especially

consider what I have called the *Descriptive Adverbs*, a category of very curious words which have not been sufficiently noticed and which disclose a wonderful power of description in the Thonga mind.

These words, hundreds and even thousands of which are employed by the Natives, consist in monosyllables or polysyllables, often repeated twice or thrice, and generally following the verb *ku*. This verb *ku*, which is also one of the curious features of Thonga grammar, a very primitive verb indeed, designates any manifestation of self, either in action, speech, or thought, and can be translated accordingly by to do, to say, or to think. Now, for the wonderfully acute senses of the sons of the bush, everything — man, beasts, objects of Nature — speaks and thinks, and these adverbs try to express in picturesque words these actions, this language of the things, sounds as well as movements, attitudes, feelings, etc.

Let us begin by the *sound*. The Hare, in one of the Thonga tale, is represented as sleeping, when it suddenly awakens having heard a sala, the fruit of the nsala tree (p. 16), falling from the branch and *saying*: katla-katla, katla-katla, be! Katla-katla evidently translates the noise made by the hard shell of the fruit knocking against the branches on its way down until it reaches the ground and abruptly finishes its journey, the end of which is rendered by the short monosyllable *be*!... The Hare frightened by the noise, runs away and arouses all the beasts of the bush, one after the other, saying: "I have heard a noise of *katla-katla, katla-katla, be*" or, here he changes the word, probably to avoid a tiresome repetition: "*ngaya-ngaya, ngaya-ngaya, be!*" This can be called an *onomatopoeia* and is met with in a great many languages. A certain number of the adverbs descriptive of sound are universally known and used. Birds say: *pse! tswi! tsiri!* The wind says: *wotshyu-wotshyu*... A man says *go-go-go,* he knocks at the door; *mpfaaa,* he tears a cloth; *pfotlo,* he breaks a stick, etc. There are hundreds of them in Thonga, and any one having enough imagination can still invent new ones; I remember hearing a Native describing a waggon rolling along a stony road: you could recognise the

sound of the wheels, of the chain, of the frame, grinding, rattling, creaking!

Sometimes the descriptive adverb is very different from the sound it is intended to imitate: thus, when the dog is said to *say: ndo-ndo-ndo,* the mouse: *tlulu-tlulu,* the duyker: *rurururu,* the hare: *tlwa-tlwa-tlwa.* Here the character of the movement, or of the gait, is described as well as the sound. We find indeed that a considerable number of these adverbs are *descriptive of movements,* viz., of phenomena perceived by the eyes, and not by the ear. They translate the impression made on the brain by objects, motions *seen* and not heard, *phenomena of vision.*

Movements of all kinds, of animate or inanimate beings, are vividly reproduced by the descriptive adverbs. Movements of the whole body: a man says *gaa,* he falls on his back; *dlomu, nyupe,* he plunges into the water; *retemuku,* he slips; *ngiri-ngiri-ngiri,* he walks down; *khaga,* he climbs; *bvumbuluku,* he rises briskly. Movements of one limb: *ume,* he lifts the arm to threaten; *ntshuki,* he shakes his head to deny; *kutje,* he nods in assent; *tjope-tjope,* he twinkles. Movements which entail definite actions: *ntswi, mpsi,* he ties; *nkwaa,* he opens a door; *petlu,* he breaks something; *dli,* he pierces; *bvonyu,* he spoils; etc., etc.

The various *kinds of gait* can also be described in this primitive way: *ntu-ntu-ntu,* the elephant, a bulky thing, advancing slowly; *kwanyi-kwanyi,* the lion walking heavily; *pha-pha-pha,* the jerky flight of the butterfly; *kwe-kwe,* a man walking with difficulty: *tsere-tsere,* walking deliberately; *kwiti,* limping; *gutsele-gutsele,* a lame man; *nyantsa-nyantsa,* spying out. The frog jumping on the ground, and later on into the water says: *nwe... nwe...nwe... djiama!* (this last word describing the plunge into the water). A man running slowly says *wahle;* with small steps: *nyakwi-nyakwi;* with rapidity: *phene-mene-mene,* or *nyu-nyu,* or *kwaru-kwaru;* sprinting, *nana-nana,* or *nwana-nwana.*

The various *attitudes* are expressed by words, sometimes in a very amusing way: a man says *phavava,* or *nhabalala,* or *baratjatja,* he lies on his belly; he says *wololoko,* he stands erect;

khempfa, he sits down very tired; *yinti*, he stands listening attentively, etc.

The *facial expressions* are minutely described by a great wealth of such words: a man says: *langu*, he looks at something; *lori*, with attention; *dloto*, intently, and for a long time; *pari*, with anger; *dlanya*, with kindness.

Let us take another step forward and we shall find another category describing the *state of mind*, the feelings of the heart, which are also phenomena of vision as far as they correspond to given attitudes of the body or to certain expressions of the features. A man says *gee*, he is happy; *kono*, he fears; *nkwinkwisi*, he is in bad humour; *doko-doko*, he covets; *punavuna*, he has pity.

By means of such adverbs *phenomena of Nature* and even *abstract ideas* can be described. Heaven says, *mphu*, it becomes dark; *dzunu*, the day breaks; the smoke says *tobi-tobi*, it ascends to heaven; the water, or the rays of the sun, say *lululu*, they begin to feel warm; the fire says *lasi-lasi*, it is seen flickering far away.

Abstract ideas. Men say *bi* or *kutlu*, they are all killed, to the last one (total destruction); somebody says *kwemetelo*, he does not attain his end, etc.

The list of the descriptive adverbs which I have collected comprises more than 250 of them. Most of them were obtained in the following way. Teaching my pupils the Bukhaneli, viz., the Grammar of their own language — which I always found a very interesting and useful subject of study for them — I asked each of them to write down at once 50 of these strange words. Without hesitation they complied with my demand, one of them writing as many as 70. Almost all of them were different. This shows the extreme wealth of the language, in this respect. It is no exaggeration to say that, in Thonga, there are ten, perhaps twenty times more descriptive adverbs than those quoted by my pupils. Dealing with characteristics of the Thonga or Bantu (1) mind, I think they are worth every

(1) Thonga or Bantu? i. e. are these words peculiar to Thonga, or also present in other Bantu dialects? That they exist everywhere is proved by the comparative Grammar of Torrend, who calls them: onomatopoetic substantives

consideration. These thousands of words, instinctively formed to express the impression made on the brain by any kind of phenomena, prove the existence of a wonderful power of description. The Bantu mind vibrates with an astonishing intensity at any shock from the outside, and it finds a way of expressing this vibration by picturesque words which give an extraordinary interest and colour to speech. (1) Bantu

and quotes some of them from Kafir and Senna. He refers to the whole list of such onomatopoetic words compiled by the Rev. A. Hetherwick in his Yao Grammar, and Rebmann in Kinyassa Dictionary. Colenso gives a good many of them in his Zulu-English Dictionary, and Grout only briefly mentions five of them in his chapter on Zulu interjections. Endeman, in the first edition of his Sotho Grammatik, recognises their existence (page 170), and classes them also as interjections, but adds: "Most of the interjections of this kind do not belong to the written language(gelangen nicht zur schriftlichen Darstellung)." It is most probable that descriptive adverbs are spread in all Bantu languages, and so the conclusions which I draw from them as to the mind of the Thonga tribe, apply equaily to the Bantu as a race.

As regards the name given to them, I would object to the term interjection. If some of them can be used as such, i. e. "thrown amongst" other words without syntactic connection, they generally follow the verb *ku ku* (or *li* or *ti*) just as "yes" or "no" follow the verb to say. So they are rather adverbs than interjections. Nor can I approve of the term employed by Torrend : onomatopoetic substantives. Substantives they are certainly not, as they pertain to none of the eight classes and have nothing of the nature of nouns. On the other hand, only a part of them are real onomatopoeiae, i. e. words resembling the sound made by the thing of which they are the names. So the term descriptive adverbs seems to me the best, and should professional grammarians not like to adopt it, I would only suggest that they should be considered as words which have no true equivalents in our more polished European languages and which form a new category, a new species to add to the classical eight parts of speech! After all the language is not made for the Grammar, but the Grammar is made for the language! And we, Europeans, cannot pretend to have found all the ways of expression of which the human mind is capable. Should the Bantu have discovered another class of words which render them spendid service, why should we proclaim them not worthy of consideration and exclude them from the written language?

(1) For the linguists, I add a few particulars concerning the grammatical nature of these words and the importance they may have had in the evolution of human speech. The intonation, the gesture, accompanying these adverbs of course greatly help to understand their meaning. Sometimes the word is *short*, ends sharply, as *gi*, a blow on a pole to drive it in the ground; or it is *prolonged* as *ra-a-a*, the unrolling of a mat which drags along the ground ; or *repeated* many times, when the action consists in a series of repeated motions : *ngiri-ngiri-ngiri*, walking down to the spruit. From the etymological point of view, some adverbs may be termed *primitive* and some others *derivate*. Primitive

are far superior to us in this respect, and this is why so few Europeans can really learn, and properly use, these descriptive

are, for instance, *dzi*, act of planting (hence the verb ku dzima), *nyupe; nvupe*, act of plunging (hence ku nyupela), etc. But others are distinctly derivate, for instance : *humelelo*, impression caused by somebody who suddenly appears. It certainly derives from the verb ku humelela, which is itself the double applicative derivate of ku huma, to come out ; ku humelela means, according to the law of verbal derivation, to be produced, to happen, to arrive, to appear. Hence the descriptive adverb. Other instances of such derivations are : *relemuku*, *rendjeleku*, *tlheriso*, *woloko*, *khabutelo*. They are generally long words (though all the long ones are not derivate by any means). A regular means of derivation even seems to consist in the addition of the suffix *iyani* to the infinite of the verb ; so a man "says" *yetleliyani*, he sleeps, (from ku etlela, to sleep) ; *yimisiyani*, he stands erect (from ku yima, to stand). It seems as if people had found so much pleasure in expressing their ideas by these picturesque means that they even convert regular verbs into descriptive adverbs !

I must still mention that some of these adverbs, placed between the verb *ku* and the adverb, as shown in the following examples, have a real transitive nature and can be preceded by a direct object, especially those which express actions. Ex. : A ku *shi* wuyuwuyu, he throws *that* away ; a ku *mu* mpsi, he makes *him* mpsi, he binds him ; even the verbal reflective prefix *ti* (which is a kind of invariable pronoun) can be used in this connexion. Ex. : A ku *ti* mpsi, he ties himself. Some are at the same time transitive and intransitive, according to the sense. Ex. : A ku kwe-kwe, he drags his leg ; (it is a kind of gait) ; a ku yi kwe, he drags it (the pole) ; (it is a transitive action).

The fact that many of these words give birth to regular verbs is highly interesting and would alone vindicate my contention that they must be carefully studied. They correspond to a phase of human development when language is still living and creating new expressions, enriching itself by means of vocables invented on all sides. Let me remind the reader of what I narrated in Vol. I, Appendix II about *nxoko*. This expression was invented by an old Thonga of Rikatla, a blind man of 70 or 80, who expressed by this exclamation his satisfaction in finding himself in a good company. The word seemed so much to the point that it made its fortune. The inventor was sirnamed Nxoko and he formed the verb ku *nxoka*, to be happy, even to *nxokela*, the relative derivate, to be happy in a certain place. Certainly such linguistic phenomena can do much to explain the origin of language. Even grand spiritual words have been derived from those exclamations of the childish mind of the Natives. So *phati-phati*, the shining of a fat ox, has given *ku phatima* and *kwetsi-kwetsi*, the brilliancy of a bottle, *ku kwetsima*, both verbs which were found the best to express the idea of sanctity or purity (in its positive sense). Has not Max Muller supposed that the root of *Deus*, a word which played such a great part in the evolution of mankind, originally came from the exclamation *Devar* to which our Aryan forefathers gave vent when contemplating the sky ? Devar was probably nothing but a descriptive adverb.

It is to be feared that books and book language will destroy this most

adverbs (without mentioning those who look upon them with contempt!) And this is one of the signs of that which I am not ashamed to call the literary sense of the Bantu mind !

E. THE NUMERALS, AND THE WANT OF ARITHMETICAL SENSE

Compared to the thousands of descriptive adverbs, Numerals make a poor show indeed in the Thonga Grammar ! The Thonga possess only seven of them : *ñwe,* one ; *biri,* two ; *raru,* three ; which are constructed as adjectives ; *mune,* four ; *ntlhanu,* five, *khume,* ten ; *dzana,* hundred, which are nouns. With those seven words they must express all the numbers. The process is very complicated indeed. Nine hundred and eighty seven will have to be rendered as follows : five hundred, and four hundred, and five tens, and three tens, and five, and two. This system of numeration is evidently decimal, and is in direct relation with the ten fingers of the hands ; this is proved by the fact that, when counting, Natives generally use their fingers. They start with the little finger of the left hand, *one* ; then the little finger and the third finger, *two* ; these two and the second, *three* ; these three and the index, *four* ; these four and the thumb, *five ;* then they add the fingers of the right hand beginning with the thumb : five plus one, five plus two, five plus three, five plus four. *Ten* is shown by clapping both hands ; notice that five, the left hand with the thumb separated from the four other fingers, imitates the Roman sign of V, and ten, the two hands united, fingers crossing each other, make an X, the Roman sign for 10 ! This shows that our numeration, of which we are justly proud, probably began in the same way as it did amongst most of the Bantu !

On the other hand it must be said that, if this system did

interesting way of speaking, so much used by those Natives who are truly Bantu, and the genius of the race will certainly suffer from this loss. Let Europeans, in this as in so many other domains, try to *understand* the Native in order not to spoil him !

not reach a higher development, the cause lies in the fact that Thonga do not *want*, or do not *take the trouble* to deal with high figures. They very soon declare that a number is: "tjandja bahlayi (Dj.) or hlulabakonti (Ro.)" viz., "the one which passes the capacity of reckoners." When Gungunyane made a raid into the Ntimane district and stole the oxen there, his men tried to count the cattle, but, having experienced much difficulty in the operation, they said to their king: "It is tjandja-bahlayi!" — "They are innumerable!" There were a few hundreds of them. (1)

More than that! Bantu have not reached *any precision* in counting the hours of the day, for instance, because there was no necessity for doing so in the primitive state. Think how much our habit of always consulting our watches has contributed to create the sense of precision in us and to introduce it into our lives. For the Bantu, the sun is the only watch, and that great time-keeper is all sufficient for them. Do they want to fix a rendez-vous for the following day? They point to a place in the sky, and say: "We shall meet when the sun has reached that spot". It may be in the morning, at the time "when the rays of the sun begin to pierce" (tlhaba-sana); at noon, nhlekanhin "when the sun is in the middle of its course"; in the afternoon, *hi mfenya*, say the Ronga, "when the sea breeze comes up", as is the case almost every day; or "when the sun is going down" (ndjenga). (2) It must be added that the sun is rarely hidden in these lands of light.

(1) As regards *counting men*, in former times, this was positively prohibited. If any one, seeing a throng assembled on the hubo, wanted to know the number of people present, they would say to him: "What! You are counting us? Whom do you want to do away with?" (Shana wa hi nkonta, u ta hi pumba na?)

(2) If this use of the sun as a means of fixing the time unavoidably leads to a want of precision, on the other hand, it has created a wonderful sense of orientation amongst the Natives. They never lose sight of the North, they always know where the sun rises and sets, and this is no doubt the secret of their instinct. When travelling with them, we need not consult the compass; I would rather put my fate in their hands, knowing that they will not make any mistakes as regards the direction, (they will certainly make many as regards distance), as they say their *hearts* (timbilu, same word employed for

As regards the counting of days, they have special names for to-morrow (mundjuku), the day after to-morrow (mundlwana), and the three following ones; for the third day, pambari; the fourth, wo dlankambane, viz., the one when the travellers going on a commercial journey break the plate in order to be obliged to come home (p. 128); for the fifth, wa tiki- tiki. Tolo, is yesterday; tolwen, the day before yesterday; tolwen wa hase, the day preceding the day before yesterday; ñanwaka, this year; hashau, next year; nweshemu, last year; ñwaka lowo, the year before last. One hardly counts days, or years, further than these. (1)

One occasion on which arithmetical skill, or at least the faculty of addition, is specially required, is the counting of the lobolo, when this consists in hoes. Then the tens are carefully piled up separately, the whole family witnessing the operation, but this can hardly be called a mathematical achievement.

So, on the whole, the opportunities of making use of the arithmetical faculty are very few in the primitive Native life, and we ought not to be astonished that this faculty has remained undeveloped. To pretend however that it is altogether wanting would be erroneous. I can give many proofs that it exists, and sometimes manifests itself in an interesting way.

First in the game called *nyengeli-nyengeli mune*. The players place a number of fruit stones on the ground two by two. One turns his back, and the other player, pointing at the first group of two, asks: Nyengeli nyengeli mune?" i.e: "How many stones are there? (Nyingi leyi mune)". The one whose back is turned replies: "Take one away and place it elsewhere",

genius and instinct), viz., their subconscious powers, help them better than our instruments in the midst of the African bush; without mentioning their knowledge of Native paths These powers have been cultivated by the constant observation of the sun.

(1) In my Grammaire Ronga, another list of names of the days following to-day is given, containing as many as 7. This seems to be the Ronga version, whilst the one here given is the Djonga one. However, in neither case is the list in constant and common use. It is known only to certain individuals who consider it more or less as a curiosity. To count days further than the day after to-morrow is quite unusual.

specifying where. This same thing is done with the second, and so on. Certain groups have eventually more stones than others. When a group is entirely scattered, the guesser says : "Makua ntsikitane", meaning "There are no more". The questioner then passes rapidly from group to group, over and over again, and the guesser must state how many stones each group contains. The game requires a considerable effort of memory.

Second proof : Shinangana! Shinangana is a man living in Spelonken, near Elim Station, a raw Native who ignores the art of reading and writing, who never went to school, but who has, however, created a *chronology* embracing the past 70 years. He knows what has happened in each year since 1859, and has arrived by himself at the conception of an era. His era starts from the emigration of the Thonga tribes into the Transvaal, when they fled before Manukosi, at the return of the Ngoni chief from Mosapa or Gaza country (I p. 27). The Nkuna, Mavundja, Tsungu and other Hlabi clans were obliged to take refuge in Spelonken, and this is the beginning of the era. Most of the years after that great event, have their special designation. I had the good fortune to have an interview with Shinangana in 1905 and could note the details of his chronology, as he dictated them to me. After having detailed all these years, he concluded in a triumphant tone with the exclamation : "All these years since the return of Manukosi make five hundred, and three hundred, and four months!" This is a most curious piece of Native historiography, and something which I think is quite unique in the whole Thonga tribe. Having a remarkable bent for this work, he developed his gift, acquired fame, and was consulted by all those who wanted to know their age, or the date of some event. This increased his powers. He took a great delight in these consultations and working at his subject every day, owing to his wonderful memory, he could recite all the chronology without the slightest hesitation. I give it in Appendix I, and it is worth being published, not only as a proof of the possibility of an arithmetical development amongst raw Natives, but also for its contents, as a contribution to the knowledge of the history of the Northern Transvaal.

We come to the same conclusion when teaching our pupils arithmetic in our missionary schools. This is certainly the branch of study in which they are the least proficient, and their teachers will all confess having sometimes despaired of their mathematical faculty. However, when taught European numeration, English or Portuguese, most of them learn the four rules, and many attain to the Weights and Measures, and the Rule of Three. I saw a class of young Natives successfully studying Algebra in Lovedale, and they are not altogether incapable of Arithmetic. However they succeed better when the effort is one of memory, and this explains why they are much more at their ease when learning the English Weights and Measures, those complicated operations of reductions, than when put to the metric system which seems so much more simple and rational. The English system requires a perfect committal to memory of the relation between the various measures, yards, feet and inches, gallons, pints, gills, pounds, ounces and grains, and, these being once mastered, all work becomes purely mechanical. This is what Natives like, whilst in the metric system there is one idea pervading the whole and a minimum of reasoning is necessary for its use : the necessity for this very minimum explains the unpopularity of the metric system amongst the Native pupils ; and the difficulty increases ten times when they come to problems, and have to solve them without having been told whether addition or substraction is necessary ! So arithmetic, when workable by the agency of memory, seems to them an easy and agreeable study. When requiring reasoning, it is a painful occupation. Had Shinangana been trained, would he also have been a genius in that kind of mathematics where the power of reasoning is at work ? No one knows, but what I notice is that all his achievements were, after all, but masterpieces of memory, and that reasoning had very little to do with them.

The conclusion of our observations is then the following : in the Bantu mind the literary sense infinitely exceeds the mathematical. This is probably the case in all uncivilised or half civilised races, but amongst the South Africans it is strikingly apparent.

F. THE LITERARY SENSE OF THE THONGA

Let us look more closely into this literary faculty which the Thonga grammar has already revealed to us. It not only consists in the possession of a well constructed language, denoting powers of classification, of combination, of co-ordination and of graphic description, but it also shows itself in the presence of real powers of dignified exaltation and of comparison, and in a rich folklore.

The *facility of elocution*, amongst the Thongas, is very great. Any one, man or woman, is at any time ready to speak, and speaks correctly with the greatest ease. On this point, this race is perhaps more advanced than many civilised ones. Nothing like the timidity you so often meet with amongst peasants or workmen of our own lands, who, though they have had a full course of primary education, would be totally unable to deliver an address. A Native can always stand up and say what he thinks on any given question. Even if he has not thought much about it, he can speak! Finding words is no difficulty for him. The knowledge will perhaps be wanting, but fluency of speech never! This ease of elocution has evidently been acquired through a long experience in the discussion of public affairs on the *hubo*, where, as we saw (I, p. 410), every one has the right of expressing his opinion. This habit has developed the literary ability, and the Bantu, as a whole, deserve the compliment once paid to the pupils of the Lovedale Institute by the Rev. Henderson, when he said to them: "Your race has certainly received the gift of eloquence!" (1)

(1) This power of elocution is very useful in Mission work, when evangelising the heathen villages all over Thongaland, the converts being always willing to make a speech or deliver an exhortation. They generally do it in a very lively fashion, and although the thinking is often poor, and does not show much sequence, they at least are never at a loss for words. I only once witnessed such a sad occurrence! One of my pupils had prepared a sermon and was delivering it, when suddenly he stopped and could not proceed. He had lost the thread. Then a good natured smile appeared on his features and all his companions laughed heartily. This was the first time they had seen

As regards the subject matter of their speeches, it does not always show much reflection, or many new ideas. Nor is there much order of sequence in their discourses. This would require proportion, measure, forethought, and all these virtues rather belong to the arithmetical sense which is so sadly deficient in the Bantu mind. What makes a Bantu address especially interesting is rather the *power of comparison* exhibited by Bantu speakers. They excel in discovering spiritual truths in material facts, or rather in perceiving the relations between the spiritual and the external world. This is one of the features of the poetical faculty, and these so-called savages certainly have some sense of poetry in their minds. Most of the antithetic riddles, which will be quoted shortly, are instances of this power of comparison. When developed by proper training, this faculty will certainly become productive of valuable work.

So far, the training of Natives has been mostly in religious subjects, and I beg to give my readers some examples of their mode of comparison which I noted while hearing evangelists preaching, examples which strongly bear the impress of Bantu character. Sometimes the imagination is so subtle that it becomes almost incoherent. For them it is enough if the point which the two things compared have in common, that which grammarians call the "tertium comparationis", is almost infinitesimal.

For instance a Tembe Christian exhorting his hearers to fight against evil, says:

Let us, in this fight, take the shield which has been made from the skin of this ox slaughtered for our sake, Jesus Christ.

A moment of reflection is required to find the logical tie which unites all these images. The Bantu shield being made of ox-hide, the scriptural image of the slaughtered lamb had to be transformed into that of an ox, for the sake of comparison!

one of their countrymen in this predicament! The student had prepared a plan for his allocution, and had indeed lost the thread! In former times plans were altogether wanting and consequently there were no threads to lose!

Another evangelist, whose discourses were specially interesting because he was a master in this art, one day spoke for more than half an hour on the text " Charity which is the bond of perfectness ". In Thonga, bond, string, or rope is expressed by the same word (ngoti). So he showed how a string could be compared to charity by a great number of images, of which I remember at least the two following ones :

This rope, charity, is the rope which attaches the donkey to the trunk of a tree. In the evening you tie up the donkey. It can graze the whole night all round the tree without any fear of being lost. So when we remain in connection with our Saviour, who is the tree, then we are happy and protected against any danger.

He evidently remembered the words of Christ : I am the vine. And he added :

Charity is the string, the string which ties up a parcel. You have plenty of precious things in your parcel... But if you possess no string to tie up all these things, they will be lost on the way, one after the other, and you will reach the end of your journey (or of your life) having kept none of your spiritual advantages, etc.

Hear how Simeon Gana tried to explain what conscience is :

Conscience resembles two companions who have made an arrangement to plunder, with impunity, another man's field of sweet potatoes. One of them climbs a tree, the other takes the hoe and digs up the potatoes. As soon as the owner of the field appears, the one on the tree whistles and the other promptly runs away, so that he is never caught. But one day, the climber ran a thorn in his foot and he was obliged to sit down and extract it, as he could not climb to his post of observation in that condition. In the meantime his companion was stealing the potatoes in perfect assurance, thinking his companion was on watch. The owner arrived on the scene and caught him. Now you clearly see that conscience is the man who climbed on the tree. As long as he was doing his duty, success attended their plan. As soon as he does not work, man falls into disgrace. So let our conscience always be awake and warning us !

We, Europeans, would never have dreamt of such a simile! Conscience represented by a thief helping another one to steal! Bantu hearers were perfectly satisfied...

Another comparison bearing on a similar subject :

The words of God are powerful and they stir up the heart. They are like intestinal worms (manyokwana) which for a long time remain quiet in the body. But one fine night they awake and man cries from pain, and says : " I am ill ! " For years the man used to mock the word of God, but that day he has felt its power !

Hundreds of such comparisons, not always denoting a very refined taste, but always picturesque, might be collected from the addresses of Native Christians. I only add this one which is deeper and more significant than many others, and which occurred to the imagination of one of my pupils :

We, preachers of the Gospel, are messengers of mourning. We have been sent to inform people of the great mourning of Jesus-Christ by which He saved the world. Let us not resemble that messenger who had to go to another country to deliver his errand. On the way he passed a village where people were drinking beer. He heard the songs, looked at the dance, entered and did not deliver his message. Such would we be, if distracted by worldly amusements, we were to neglect our sacred duty of preaching the cross.

Besides this undeniable power of comparison, Native addresses often reveal another curious feature : Natives are fond of presenting ideas in a round-about manner. This is called *ku pamba*. Under expressions apparently harmless they hide other meanings in a manner so ingenious and delicate that some of their hearers often fail to understand them. This literary procedure is often apparent in their riddles, or proverbs.

The literary proclivity of the Natives, finally, manifests itself in the very interesting and rich folklore which will form the subject of our second chapter.

CHAPTER II

The Thonga folklore

It may be said that Thonga folklore exhibits three different styles: *didactic* and sometimes *sententious* poetry, in its proverbs and riddles, *narrative* poetry in its manifold tales, and *lyric* poetry in its songs. The two first descriptions may be called to a certain extent *collective* or *traditional*: all the riddles or tales are ancient products of the literary activity of the tribe, handed down to the Thonga of to-day by oral tradition. New songs, on the contrary, are continually being composed, and bear a much more *personal* or *individual* character. I have given a great many examples of tales, and songs, in my "Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga" (324 p.), as well as in "Les Ba-Ronga" (p. 253-363).

My present object is not to compile all the material at hand, as this would be far too long a process, but to give a general idea of Thonga folklore, and to complete my previous study by the publication of some new tales and riddles chosen from those collected since the two preceding works were published. The source is almost inexhaustible, and would suffice for the compilation of two or three volumes. The examples here given will be representative enough to convey a true idea of this rich folklore, and I refer the reader to the two books previously quoted if he wishes for more information.

A. PROVERBIAL SAYINGS AND ENIGMAS

The enigmas certainly furnish us with a very precious means of gaining an insight into the secret workings of the Native mind, as they form doubtless the quaintest part of their literature, and that which bears the least resemblance to any portion of our

own ! I have already quoted some examples of riddles in my first volume, and the obscurity of these sayings has been sufficiently obvious. Without special explanation it would be difficult indeed to discover their meaning.

I. *Proverbial sayings.*

As regards *proverbs*, the Ba-Ronga possess a few which contain one single proposition, as for example :

1) Mumiti wa nhengele a dumba nkolo wa kwe.
He who swallows a large stone has confidence in the size of his throat.

This might be said in any country and will be recognised, at once, as applying to bumptious and pretentious folk !

2) U nga hlaule matjhuna ya mhangela.
One must not choose the male of the guinea-fowl.

Guinea fowls are all alike, male and female. So do not point to one and say : " This is a male. " You would be liable to make a mistake, and to be made fun of ! This proverb is said to a young husband who might be tempted to prepare the *ntehe* before the birth of his child, which is taboo. (I. p. 44). Compare this with the proverb : Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.

3) Tinhlange ta le ntjhaku ti tibyiwa hi mutlhabi.
The tattooing marks made on the back are known by the tattooer (not by the tattooed !).

You do not know what may happen when you have turned your back. This warning was given by one of the Church elders, of Lourenço Marques, to a missionary who was leaving on furlough !

4) Matimba ya ngwenya i mati.
The strength of the crocodile is water.

When you are in your own domain you can succeed ; do not try to fight outside it. You would be like " a fish out of water ".

5) U nga nwe mati, u seletela nhlobo ; mundjuku u ta nwa kwini ?
Do not close the well after having drunk. Where would you drink to-morrow ?

Here the sense is at once apparent.

6) Mbuti ya shihaha a yi belekeli ntlhambin.
A good goat does not bring forth in the midst of the flock.

I heard this proverb in one of our Synods. One of the Native members wanted to exhort his co-delegates to abstain from giving their advice, and voting precipitately on a certain subject : let us rather go outside, discuss amongst ourselves, and when we have come to an understanding we shall come back and vote as one man !

This last example shows how such proverbs are used... They sometimes are quoted in a low voice, so as to be heard only by those whom it is desired to warn. It is an instance of the *phamba* just referred to.

Compare also the proverb quoted (p. 22) in connection with tilling the fields :

Do not look at the weeds and think : Now ! I have tilled a large field !

Be not satisfied by mere external appearances ! Weeds may be plentiful, yet the field be small !

Hundreds of such sayings might be collected, (1) though I do not think they are so extensively used as, for instance, in the Suto tribe, where M. Jacottet told me he collected one thousand of them. The Thonga replace them by riddles, which seem to be more developed amongst this people than in the neighbouring tribes.

(1) We might also consider as proverbs, and include under this heading, the figurative terminology used to express the principles of right and justice, which are, as it were, a first codification of the common law, and to which I have previously referred — as for instance the curious sentence : A cow which has calved is not used for paying a debt. (I. p. 215).

II. *Riddles.*

I have already described (I. p. 319) the part riddles play in the games of the Thonga village. The riddle, *mbumbana*, consists first in guessing where the charcoal piece is hidden, and then it is merely a matter of guess work. But it may have a more literary character, when it consists in a more or less witty question which requires a given reply. The answer, here, is in one word ; so these riddles may be called *riddles in one sentence.*

Leshi u nga khandjiyiki nsinya ya shone, n'shini ? — Hi ndjulu.
What is the thing up the trunk of which one cannot climb ? It is the juncus.
Leshi nhaka nenge wa shone u nga rwali hi ku bindja u ya tlhasa shilungwin, n'shini ? — Hi nsuna.
What is the animal whose leg is so heavy that you could not carry it to Lourenço Marques ? — The mosquito (which is so very light !)
Leshi shi nga heta hubo ya ka Machakene, shi ndjundja, shi kwala hubyen ?— Hi nhwala !
What is it that is all over the square at Machakene, that creeps and crawls about on it ? It is the louse !

This is a malicious one ! The village of Machakene, formerly in the immediate vicinity of Lourenço Marques, where the fashionable European quarter is now situated, was the place where men, arriving from the interior to find work at the seaport, usually passed the night. They appear to have been somewhat annoyed with unwelcome attentions ! Hence the riddle.

Here is a rather more difficult one :

Tiban leshi, nambi mamana wa nwana a ku mu randja ngopfu, loko a tlhasa kaya a nga hluleka ka ku mu yamukela ? — Hi nyimba.
Guess what is it that a mother dearly loves but which could not run to meet her on her return home ? — It is the unborn babe in her womb.

Another riddle of the same kind is this :

Tiba leshi, nambi shi shongile, afaka u nga ti wopsana na ye ? — Hi makwenu.

Do you know the person to whom you would not make an improper proposal, however handsome she may be? — It is your sister.
Leshi nsinya ya shone yi nga bonekiki ntshini ? — Yendje-yendje.
The thing of which the stem is invisible, what is it ?— The cuscuta.

This plant makes Natives wonder, because its root and stem are so rarely seen. One knows that it grows from a root, but when it has developed, the stem dies and the plant lives as a parasite.

Leshi, nambi wa ba, ntonsi wa kone wu nga boneki ? — I mati.
The thing which you can beat without leaving a scar ? — Water.

One more which has a more philosophical appearance and which might be of later origin.

Leshi nga hamba Tilo ni Misaba, hi tshini ? — Ntumbuluko !
The thing which made Heaven and Earth, what is it ?— Nature !

Ntumbuluko comes from ku tumbuluka, to be created, to appear, and is well translated by the word Nature (See Part VI Chapter I).

The Thonga possess a plentiful supply of *enigmas in two propositions*, which they call *psitekatekisana* and of which I have collected about a hundred. I could easily have found ten times as many. One of our female neighbours (Lishanyi) knew a great number of these and could pour them forth without stopping well on towards the middle of the night.

Whoever may be the most expert at asking the questions takes the lead, and commences with a kind of invocation of which I have not been able to discover the meaning : Ñwanyanga mintjuti, lit. son of the moon, shadows. Then addressing one of the other players, and speaking very rapidly, he (or she) will say : " Teka, teka, teka (take, guess) heeee... ! ", following this up with the question to be asked, which forms the first part of the enigma; the person addressed must immediately reply with the phrase forming the second part. If he is unable to answer, or gives a wrong reply, the questioner says : " Psi ku hlulile " — " you are beaten ", and passes

on to another player, again beginning with "teka, teka, teka" and asking the same question until some one is able to give the correct rejoinder. Hence the name of this game, psiteka-tekisana, i. e. things which you make others guess.

It will be seen that we are not dealing with enigmas in the proper sense of the word, with solutions only to be obtained by keenness of thought and reflection; the answers to these must be learnt by heart, and it only requires a good memory to become an adept in the game. The ancestors, however, who composed the enigmas, and handed them down to posterity, were by no means lacking in wit and ingenuity. The examples given below I owe mostly to Timotheo Mandlati, a Nkuna of Shiluvane, who wrote them down for me in the dialect of his own tribe; some of them are in Hlengwe. I also obtained a good many from my Ronga informants, Spoon and Galu of Libombo, Titus, and Shilati, a blind man who thought himself very learned in the "enigmatic art", but who understood very little of what he was talking about, and, in any case, was quite unable to give any explanation of his enigmas. Some are the common property of both Ba-Ronga and Ba-Nkuna; they seem to be very popular throughout the Thonga tribe.

To begin with, here are some examples of which *the inner meaning is not difficult to discover* :

Teka-teka-teka-he ! Tiba ro pshya matlelo ? — Ndlopfu yi fa hi tshembeti.
The lake dries up at the edges ? — The elephant is killed by a small arrow.

A great result (the drying up of a lake, the death of an elephant) is often produced by a very small cause (the gradual evaporation of water at the edges, a little arrow). The idea approximates that expressed in the proverb : "Il ne faut pas mépriser les petits commencements", or "small beginnings make great endings".

Ndja ha batla mpalala ? — Ndja ha hleketela...
I am still carving an iron wood stick ? — I am still thinking about it.

An undecided man could thus reply to those urging him to immediate action. The wood of the *mpalala* is extremely hard. "It is a long business to carve a figure of this wood" says the cunning fellow; "I am not going to make up my mind about it in a hurry!"

Ndji pfumala tshati; nha ndji ya tjhema nhonga?
— Ndji pfumala ntlambi; nha ndji ya lobola munhu lweyo.
I have no axe, or I would go and cut a stick?
— I have no oxen, or I would go and lobola this girl.

This is the sigh of the impecunious lover. By the first phrase he laments the want of an ordinary every-day object (an axe) which prevents him obtaining something he wishes for (a stick); he leaves it to be understood that a much more precious article is lacking (oxen, money, a lobolo) which would enable him to obtain something infinitely more to be desired (the girl he loves).

Ndji tshukumetele kwakwa, dji ya wa ngolongolo?
— Ndji yamukele psikomo psi pfa ni Ba-Nhlabi.
I have thrown away my kwakwa; it has rolled away to the ends of the earth (into distant lands)?
I have accepted the hoes which come from the Ba-Hlabi.

I have sold my daughter in marriage to the people of Hlabi (on the other side of the Limpopo, further up than Bilene, in Gaza); by so doing I have lost my child for ever. She has disappeared like a round fruit (kwakwa) which, when thrown a long distance, rolls and rolls away until it can never again be found. — Moral: Don't let your girls marry foreigners (Compare I, p. 247).

Shiyindlwana mpfontsho? — Mundjuku milandju.
The little hut falls down? — To morrow, debts.

If you don't keep your house in good order, you will soon find yourself in difficulties. A disorderly life leads to debt.

In other enigmas the meaning is not so self-evident as in the preceding examples. There are some which are simply *a com-*

parison of two objects or of an object and an idea which resembles it in some one particular. With the rapidity of perception characteristic of the Native mind, some clever individual has been struck with the resemblance, and has therefore composed an enigma of which the obscurity is in direct proportion to its conciseness.

Rihondjo ra ndlopfu ku mpfara ? — Munhu wa ndlala tihanyi ?
The sound of a cracked elephant-tusk ? — The anger of a hungry man.

Both have a false ring.

This Nkuna enigma is met with amongst the Ronga in the following form :

Litimbo la phila ku mbvetshe ? — Amunhu wa ndlala mahlundju.
The creaking of the dried sorghum stalk ? — The anger of a hungry man
Sikisiki dja mbangwe ? — Longoloko dja Ba-Tschwa.
The stem of hemp? — The Zulu formation (when on the march, following one another).

There is in the way the leaves grow on the hemp stalks a suggestion of the formation, or rather of the forest of plumes, of Zulu warriors on the march...

Ntshiba ukulu wa mpfafati ? — Ndjeko yikulu ya balungu.
The tall ntshiba ? — The long tumblers of the Whites.

The ntshiba is the tallest tree on the Ronga hills, and gives a beautiful shade. The long tumblers used by the Whites answer the same purpose. Both conduce to refreshment for the weary !

Tihuku ta ka Manyisa ta ka nhingena he psisuka ?
— Banwhanyana ba ka Manyisa ba ku kandja ba khisamile.
The fowls of Manyisa enter the fowl-house tails first ?
— The Manyisa girls pound maize sitting down.

This is probably a sly hit at the girls of the Manyisa country, who are reported to seat themselves when crushing maize;

everywhere else this operation is performed standing erect. They don't do things like other people. — Chickens also sometimes do things the wrong way !

Enigmas which refer to some *historical event* may be classed as a third category. The best known is the enigma concerning Tembe and his sons. (See I, p. 22). Here is another :

Ndji fambi nhlangwa lokulu ndji heketa Mimaleyane ?
— Ndji djimi nsimo leyikulu, ndji byala ndlowu yinwe.
I walked all across a big plain to accompany Memaleyane ?
— I hoed a large field and only planted a single pea.

This is doubtless the story of a rejected lover who thus wittily relates his discomfiture. He took all the trouble to accompany Mimaleyane a long way, right to her home, and received no reward for his gallantry. As well hoe a whole field and only plant one pea ! Lots of trouble for nothing !

A fourth category of enigmas comprises those in which it would seem that no real similarity of ideas exists, but merely a *similitude in sound*, a sort of graceful alliteration which is pleasing to the ear. The two following examples are very popular and very pretty as regards pronunciation :

He kumi nkuhlu, u wupfa-wupfa, ka ku sala huhlu yiñwe ?
— He kumi mulungu, a wondja-wondja, ka ku sala ndjepfu yiñwe.
We found a *nkuhlu* which ripens, which ripens ; only one nut is left ?
— We found a White man who gets thinner, thinner : nothing left but a hair of his beard.

The comparison of ideas is not difficult to perceive, but what conclusion, or moral can the author mean to convey ? None ! He has been led away by the musical charm of the words, and nothing else.

Lastly I would class in a final category *the enigmas which are altogether incomprehensible*, of which there are quite a large number.

Be khumbi ? — Mayo ! Ku fa.
The people against the wall ? — Ah ! if only I should die !

Zebedea, a very intelligent man, who gave me this enigma, could not tell me what it meant. Possibly the words may have been altered in course of transmission from generation to generation ? I could not say. In any case the following fact does not encourage us to expend our energy in trying to discover meanings to the *psitekatekisana* when they are too obscure : several of these questions, or primary phrases, can be answered in different ways ; the answer, or second phrase, varies with the informant. Suppose for instance, that the following question be put :

Makhoi ya nyari yinga-yinga ?
The horns of the buffalo wander hither and thither ?

The answer may be the well-known proverb (p. 22).

Unga bone bibi u ku ndji rimele.
Do not contemplate the heaps of weeds saying to thyself : I have finished hoeing.

Or it may be :

Barara ba bambe ndji nabela
I covet the fathers of other girls.

It may be that, in the parlour game previously described, when some one fails to give the right answer, he quotes the second sentence of another enigma on the spur of the moment, and so wrong connections are established between sentences which have no common meaning.

Are these *psitekatekisana* peculiar to our tribe, or are they to be met with elsewhere ? I cannot be certain on this point, but I have not heard anything like them quoted from other places. Some bear a strong resemblance to the antithetic proverbs of Solomon. But it must be confessed that they entirely miss the deep religious or moral meaning of most of the Jewish proverbs !

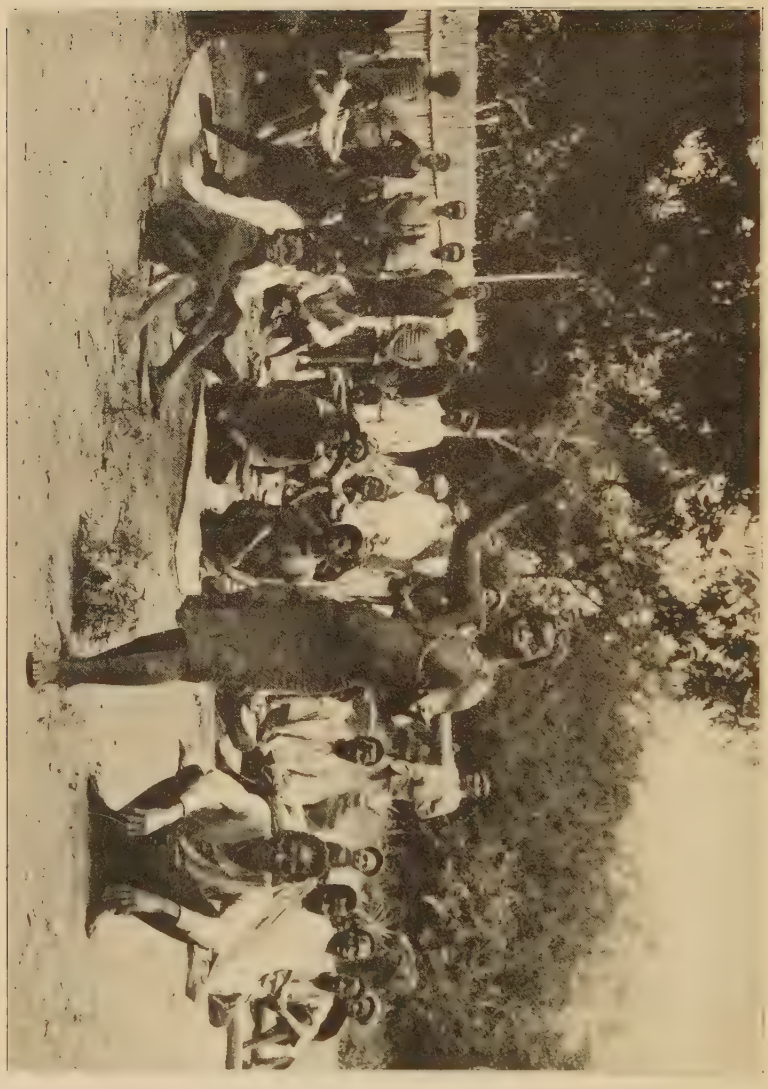
B. THONGA SONGS.

I. *Thonga poetry and Thonga poets.*

Bantu poetry widely differs from our own! So do Bantu poets from our "literary men". I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of one of them on the same day that I witnessed the crushing down of Mayibane's hut (I, p. 156). Attracted by the big gathering, and knowing that he would have plenty of hearers, and meat to his heart's content, this poet had come to adorn the occasion with his presence. He was on a literary journey, going from one village to another, singing his songs and dancing from one end of the land to the other. Tall, his face absolutely clean shaven, his eyes had a kind of absent, semi-conscious look; at the same time he seemed to be most contemptuous and to remain in an olympic calm, as if he were a very superior kind of being. He was a man of the Manyisa clan, and every one seemed to show him much consideration. When the officiants at the sacrifice were busy cutting open the victim (I. p. 159), he appeared in the circle formed by the assistants (see illustration I. p. 159, No. 7), and began his performance. He had put on a skirt of *milala* palm-leaves and imitated a lame man, assuming an air of intense suffering. Suddenly, with wonderful strength, he began to trample the ground with his feet. He had an assagai in his hand, and feigned to pierce his own side, and his thigh. Then, lifting the weapon, he cast an authoritative look on the throng and people who were laughing, stopped and kept perfectly quiet. He remained immovable regarding them with an air of supreme contempt, impassible.... And then he commenced his song (suma).

> (Chorus) Oho! Oho! (Solist) Where are you going, mother (See tune No. 1 in the collection of Thonga tunes.)

The throng joined with him in the chorus, which was really very effective. The women clapped their hands in cadence



A Thonga minstrel. *Phot. A. Borel.*

(wombela) to encourage him. Thinking they did not do it with sufficient vigour, he dug in the sand, took a handful and threatened to throw it into their eyes. They clapped with renewed ardour. One of them, the tall, light coloured one who had sung the obscene songs referred to I. p. 158, came, and with a weird smile wrapped a yellow piece of cloth round his loins. He sang other songs, trampling again furiously on the ground until the sacrificers had finished their work; then he was made to stop, and the prayer to Manyibane began.

This performance was wonderful, indeed, and its interest was in no wise inferior to the funeral ceremonies themselves. It is a typical example of Thonga poetry, where three elements are generally present : the music, the dance and the words which are more or less poetical.

This Manyisa bard is by no means an unique specimen. I remember having heard, many years ago, just such a poet, of Bilene, who visited the Ronga clans, singing ewerywhere and asking for old rags as his reward. There are poets, professional poets, who earn they livelihood by their art. There are also a number of occasional poets, who compose new songs and execute them in their own villages, not aspiring to a world-wide fame. If their tunes are pleasing, they are reported upon by others, and so reach the end of the land, carried on the strength of their own merit. Thus songs become popular and there is a great number of them constantly sung at beer-parties, after harvest, in the feasts, some gradually falling into oblivion and being replaced by new ones at each new season.

In this chapter I do not treat of the musical character of the songs; that will be considered in the next chapter, when I intend publishing the forty-two tunes of my collection. Here I only consider them as literary products, and in trying to classify them, I notice that, though most of them cannot be said to be very elaborate compositions, they pertain to many different styles, lyric, elegiac, epic, dramatic, etc. and, in addition, there are those which are sung to accompany work, as well as the incantations to animals and spirits. I will give some examples of each of these categories.

II. *Lyric poetry.*

Thonga, like most human beings, have felt the need of chanting their joys and sorrows, joining words and music in order to better express their feelings. These feelings are not very deep, as a rule, and their lyrics are a petty play rather than a painful cry of the heart. Hear for instance *the complaint of the childless woman*, who ardently longs for a baby. She went to other people and asked them to lend her one. But they refused and only consented to lend her a mortar and a plate. She then sings to a charming melody (Tune 7).

A ba boleki ñwana! — Ba boleka tshuri ni nkambana!
Ngi ndji mangatlu! — Ngi ndji shimungwe! — Ngi n'ta ku utla!
They won't lend me a baby! — They lend me but a mortar and a plate! Were I an eagle! — Were I a bird of prey! — I would carry thee away!

Those thousands of young Thonga *who go to the mines of Johannesburg*, to extract the precious auriferous quartz, seem to be quite contented with their fate. They, however, chant their misfortune to a very melodious tune (N° 8) which I once heard, in Rikatla repeated ten times by children's voices along the bushy paths. The words were in Zulu and were said to mean :

Stones are very hard to break
Far from home, in foreign land.

The tune is so catching that it has become quite popular even in French Switzerland, where I had the opportunity of singing it on many occasions.

I am afraid Bantu lyrics have more than once had occasion to celebrate the selfishness and *rudeness of the White race!* I remember travelling through the desert with three Zoutpansberg colonists, and some of their black servants. The White masters were not precisely gentle with their boys. A road had to be cut through the bush and it was hard work to remove

the stones, and to cut down the trees. The shambock was sometimes resorted to in order to stimulate the Natives. I once heard one of them, who had just been castigated, murmuring in a low tone his monotonous complaint, whilst he was chopping at a stem. I caught the following words : (Tune 9)

Ba hi shanisa!	They treat us badly!
Ba hi hlupa!	They are hard on us!
Ba nwa makhofi!	They drink their coffee!
Ba nga hi nyike!	And they give us none!

Of course the colonists, who only knew "Kitchen Kafir", could not understand the complaint of the Nkuna boy!

The *song of the crab* is more earnest! (Tune N° 10) In a deep minor key a man cries for help! He went to hunt the big crabs which dwell in the mud of the mangrove forest, or on the sea-shore. He followed one ; the animal hastily hid itself in its hole. The imprudent hunter tried to catch it there. He put his arm into the hole and wanted to pull the crab out. But the crustacean seized his finger betwen its claws so firmly that the man could not get free. He remained tightly held down, fixed to the ground. The tide is rising ; soon it will cover him! And he cries :

> Yo-o! Lomo tjukeni ku na mani? — Hala yi khomi litiho!
> Alas! - On the shore is there some one? — The crab has caught me by the finger!

This is almost dramatic poetry and the scene is worthy of a truly literary description.

The erotic style is not very generally cultivated. Love plays but a little part in Thonga life. However I have heard this *lovesong*, probably composed by a girl who was not allowed to marry the boy of her choice :

> To-morrow, to-morrow, my mother, I will start,
> To-morrow, father, I will start,
> I will start with an axe;
> With this axe I will cut the stump,
> The stump at which my friend has hurt his leg,

My friend whose belt of tails hangs from his waist,
The one for whom I draw my leg out of the way. (1)

The stump is perhaps some ill-disposed person whose opposition the energetic maid is determined to overcome !

As a counterpart, here is the *complaint of a jilted lover*, who gives vent to his annoyance with the girl and her family :

Refuse me if you will, girl !
The grains of maize you eat in your village are human eyes !
The tumblers from which you drink are human skulls !
The manioc roots you eat are human tibia !
The sweet potatoes are human fingers !
Refuse me, if you will, girl !

The vexation of a jilted lover is of short duration. He has the money, he is sure to find a girl ! But it would be erroneous to think Native lovers or husbands are not capable of deep and lasting affection. I know a case, near Shiluvane, when a Nkuna committed suicide because his wife had deceived him, and had relations with another man.

See I. p. 274, the song in which the *despised wife* gives vent to her anger : her husband has plucked her little pumpkin and has given it to the wife he preferred. No doubt the *bukwele*, the special feeling of jealousy existing between co-wives, has inspired more than one song which could have no equivalent in our own literature !

The *mourning songs* are many, and are sung just after the burial. They are touching; thus the simple cry :

Mamane ! You have left us ! whither have you gone ?

The tune (N° 14) is striking : a very high and prolonged note, followed by double crochets sounded very rapidly and ending in another long note with a short sharp conclusion, as a cry of anguish.

(1) Perhaps an allusion to the fact that it is taboo to pass over any one's outstretched legs. She draws in her legs to give him means of passing and coming to sit near her.

One of the assistants rises and sings, as if he were playing the part of the bereaved one :

A ba ndji yalange-ke lepsi ?
Have they not hated me treating me in this way ?

All the throng of the mourners answer :

Ba ku yalile, wene, wa ka manyana !
They have hated you, son of so and so !

He answers :

Ba tekile nkhao !
They have taken my intimate friend !

This is no doubt an allusion to the wizards, who are supposed to cause most of the deaths. They are cursed in another very curious song, half Zulu, noted by Mrs Audéoud in Maputju. (Tune 16.)

Hamban, Muthakati ! Bulela bantu ! — U teka b'si kwin !
Go away, wizard ! Killer of men ! — You take them during the night !

Or the mourning song may be a complaint, in which the family bewails its bereavement, like the old Nkuna song. (Tune 15):

Hi bana ba Nhumba ya ntima ! Hi bana ba Malala ni ngobe.
We are the sons of the black house (the house of misfortune and defilement).

The following one is strangely stoic :

A libeni mombo ! A li beni mombo !
Ku tshubuka, ku baba ka psone !
Let it beat the face ! Let it beat the face !
To run away, what a bitter thing !

Death is like a foe. Look at it face to face ! Do not lose your courage in this last fight.

I quote in Part VI another mourning song, a very curious

one, where an allusion is made to Heaven, this mysterious power which kills and gives life, and which we already heard mentioned in the song of the widows (I, p. 205), when they lament their bereavement.

This *stoic* song is also a *war* song; it is customary to sing the war songs at the death of any important personage. The following one belongs to the same category, and is used on both occasions :

> Ketle-ketle, ntlubane ! Fumo dji wile ! a dlawa hi nomo, Tatana !
> Hear this noise of weapons ! The assagai has fallen, he has been killed on account of his words, father !

The chief has been killed in a fight which had been caused by his imprudent words : he wanted to free himself from his suzerain (the Ngoni chief?); war ensued and he was put to death ! So the sorrow caused by death has certainly inspired the Thonga poets to compose touching themes.

The heart of the whole tribe was also stirred, at the close of the mentioned war of 1894-1896, when the young chief Ñwamantibyane, only 18 or 20 years of age, was caught and deported to West Africa. *The lament of the child* was then composed by an unknown author; but he had so well understood the feelings of the Black nation that it at once became popular; and it was heard everywhere on the wharf, hummed by hundreds of boys who carried loads or pushed trucks, chanting the sad fate of the child; in the villages, far and wide, they were singing the recital of Ñwamantibyane's sufferings :

> Ndumakazulu ! The glorious ! Known as far as Zululand !
> He fought bravely ! He was obliged to fly !
> He was caught and deported... etc.

And always again came the chorus, on a sad, resigned tone : (Tune 11).

> Hi ñwanao ! hi ñwana ba dlele ! Ñwamantibyane !
> It is the child ! the child they have killed ! Ñwamantibyane !

Eleven years later travelling far away in the Manyisa district,

I heard a tall, thin boy, playing on his unicord harp in a Banyan store, and muttering some words, which he accompanied by beating his instrument. This was still the lament of the child :

> It is the child, the child whom they have killed !
> He was not yet grown up !

The melody had greatly changed (tune 12) and the pain had passed. But the national song had not yet entirely died away. This is a kind of elegy, and in it we find a transition to the patriotic and epic songs.

III. *Epic poetry.*

The war songs have been already quoted when dealing with the Army (I. p. 435), those perfomed in the mukhumbi, at the coronation of the chief (I. p. 347) when preparing to go to fight, when returned from battle, as well as those sung during the march of the troop. I give the striking music of some of these in the next chapter. Tune 24 is the "Sabela nkosi", the great Mpfumo song, also adopted by other clans. Tune 25, with its splendid change from the minor to the major key, is the Tembe and Maputju classical war song. N° 29 is an old Nkuna war song, dating as far back as 1820, before the Zulu invasion ; N° 27 is the principal modern Nkuna song, and N° 28 the Nkuna equivalent to the Ronga *Giraffe song*. These old chants are sung to the accompaniment of the military dance, which consits in trampling on the ground in some places, rhythmically brandishing the assagais, lifting them to the right, to the left, inclining them to the side, then downwards, as if to pierce (I. p. 437). They are certainly grand compositions.

I include in the same category the laudatory song of the *mbongi* (I. p. 399), a branch of literature where Court poets display a considerable imagination and an extraordinary gift for unbounded hyperbole. To it also belong the *hunting songs*, already

mentioned p. 56, of which I here give a typical example. I have been told by my informant, Zebedea Mbenyana, a Native of Bilen, that the hunters performed it dancing on the body of the enormous beast, after having transfixed it.

1st Strophe.

They march in single file, the Elephants, the mighty ones,
They go to slake their thirst.

Antistrophe.

Let us go too! They're drinking amongst the thickets! Hurrah!

2nd Strophe.

Hark! the smothered roarings in the forest.

Antistrophe.

'Tis a grand sound, the roaring in the forest. Hurrah!

3rd Strophe.

The crying of the elephant, the mother! 'Tis she who calls the hunters to the thickets.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! 'tis she who calls the hunters! Ho! Hurrah!

4th Strophe.

Yonder's the one with ears so large and drooping.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the big-eared one has just passed us. Hurrah!

5th Strophe.

The boys are there; the sound of knives being sharpened, there from the spot where the elephant lies slain.

Antistrophe.

Hurrah! the sound of knives being sharpened. Hurrah!

This composition certainly exhibits a forceful and poetic grandeur, describing marvellously well the emotions of the courageous band who have finally succeeded in obtaining the precious tusks of the elephant, and quantities of meat. This song of

triumph is worthy of being placed amongst the best productions of the Muse of primitive races.

IV. *Satiric poetry.*

I have already mentioned the peculiar manner in which Thonga literati speak in a round-about way, using figurative language, especially when they want to say something disagreeable or to give vent to their humour. There is but one step from such forms to satire. They generally indulge in this satiric vein when dealing with relatives-in-law, women being especially prone to it. When the sisters and aunts of a married woman go to pay a visit to her, they bring with them all kinds of equivocal compliments. These must not be taken seriously! It is a round-about — exceedingly round-about way — of making graceful allusions and of expressing their mutual esteem. I will quote the series of these songs of friendly chaff and invective as it was given to me by Shigiyane, with a running commentary to render them comprehensible. These smart and pointed choruses will give a fitting finishing touch to the marriage customs, and illustrate the curious relations existing between allied families, which I explained in Vol. I, p. 230-235.

On the wedding day the women who take the bride to her husband sing the *tjeka song* :

Let us go with her, but let us go back to our homes!

This is an ironical way of saying: " She is going to find trouble: we won't follow her as far as that!" The same idea runs through all the songs these women sing during the next few days.

When they accompany the bride to her new home, they sing:

U ya kwi Mamano! — Whither goest thou, mother?
U ya kwi shana? — Whither goest thou?
Ba ta tshaha shihundju ni lihlelo, mamano!
They will bring thee the basket full of maize and the fan, my mother!

Ba ta kuma u tlokoli, ba tlokolisa, mamano !
When thou hast finished crushing it, they will make thee crush it again, my mother !
Ba ta kuma u kopoli, ba kopolisa, mamana !
When thou hast plastered the floor, they will make thee plaster it again, my mother !

But when they come to visit, carrying jars of beer as presents to the newly married couple, they are much less guarded in their language, ridiculing the poor husband and his family, and making fun of every one in general. They commence singing on the way, with the jars on their heads :

He ntshonga, banhwanyana, he nga batjanana
He la libango ; fa hi nga labi, we manyana.
Ku laba manyana ka ñwan'a manyana
We are a small band, young girls ; there are few of us.
We are looking for a piece of meat on the spit ; formerly we should not have known where to find any, our sister (so and so) !
Now our sister will get some for us from her husband !

Hi kokobisa lobe, hi ya kwihi shana ?
Hi bhanu ba ku yalwa !
He fambaka ni khombo, ni khombo dji le kaya !
Where are we going, thus dragging the hook behind us ? (1)
We are the people that are hated.
We walk in misfortune (2), the misfortune that has befallen our house !

Ka ku kandja ñwana a ku na kule.
Wo khunga he lihanyi, we koko !
Ya kokowela : kowe-kowe-kowe.
Where a daughter lives it cannot be very far off.
Go there, grannie, limping and leaning on thy staff (3)
(Listen to the hen) cackling. She says : kowe, kowe, kowe.

On arriving at the village they stop at the edge of the stream :

(1) They compare themselves to women who have been in the fields, picking *kwakwa* fruits (p. 17), and are so heavily laden that they cannot hold the hook used for pulling the fruit off the trees ; they have had to tie it on their belt, and drag it behind them on their way home. The travellers leave it to be understood that they are not out for pleasure !

(2) That of having to go and see a brother-in-law who ill-treats their sister.

(3) This line is an encouragement to the old woman who finds the walk long and tiring. The other women promise her a fowl at the end of their journey, which the son-in-law will kill for her. Note the first line of the third verse : it is a kind of proverb.

Fulamelani, banhwanyana, hi ya nwa mati nkobeni.
Stoop down, young women, let us drink water in the valley.

Finally they settle themselves in the home of their *bakoñwana*, their relatives-in-law, and commence to insult their hosts.

Ba yala na wo mbengana loko a boleka !
Ba li : " Famba, u ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta sila ".
Ba yala ni shudana, ba yala ni musana
Ba li : " U ya teka kwenu u buya wa ta tlhokola. "
They won't lend (our sister) a grindstone when she wants to borrow one.
They say to her : " Go home and fetch one and then come back and grind.
They won't lend her the small pestle and mortar.
They say : " Go home and get your own, and then come back and crush your maize ".

Then they make fun of the mother-in-law, who is whispering with the other women of the village, making arrangements, doubtless, how best to entertain the visitors. They pretend to discover in these asides some terrible plot.

A li ñwono-ñwono ! Mabulela ya nsati lweyi ! Hi file ! Hi lobile !
That woman over there is whispering ! What can she be saying !
We are dead ! we are lost !

As for the head of the village, these shrewish visitors accost him thus :

Ñwenyi wa muti, hi wene ? A ku hi hi mati, hi ñwene ?
A he hlayi wone, ya nhlobo ! Hi hla byala ne sope !
Are you the master of the village ? Are you not going to give us any water to drink ?
We don't mean well-water ; we mean beer and brandy !

The villagers approach to salute the new-comers, who sulk and won't say a word. Large pots are made ready for cooking food.

Mi kokela matambeko, mi kokela bamane ?
Kambe hi balala ! hi nga ka manyana.
You prepare the large pots... For whom are you making them ready ?
We are enemies, we are !

The young folks catch fowls in order to regale them properly. They raise objections.

A hi djyule kwee! A hi djyule kwee!
Hi djyule nkoka-hi-pindja!
We will have nothing to do with that which cries kwee. (The cry of the fowl when being killed).
We want the animal which is led with a string (a goat).

But it is the husband who has to put up with the worst insults.

Ha! matinga-tingela ya nhunu lwe! loko a hi bona a ku tlhanya psi-rubu.
Ah! see how he wants to avoid us! As soon as he sees us he runs and hides behind the houses! (He is afraid of us!)
Hi laba tima-mbilu! hi djyula mafura ya ku nona phobo.
We want something to satisfy the heart! We must have our fat very rich!
Nyoka ya nyoka! Mbyana ya mbyana! Yi whee!
Serpent that thou art! Dog that thou art! Thou sayest bow-wow!

Then to show him that they really like and appreciate him, they add, with the truly savage rudeness which they maintain to the end of the visit:

A ku hi lobolele? Na wene, bana ba ku ba ku lobolela ki khume ni ntlhanu!
Won't you buy another wife from us! Later on your daughters will bring you a dowry worth fifteen pounds sterling!

Finally, after having had plenty to eat and to drink and a good dance, they will remark, on leaving:

Hi tlhome nyonga ya mbuti, hi muka
Twine the goat's bladder in our hair, that we may go home.

All this is not very high flown poetry. The general intercourse between relatives-in-law is by no means refined and this rudeness contrasts with the ordinary civility of Native life. Let us remember that this way of speaking is not meant to show a want of politeness on the part of the visitors, but, on the contrary, the behaviour which suits the occasion! I have the music

of some of these songs which were heard by Mrs Audéoud, in Maputju. In N° 13, the bridesmaids simply exhort the bride not to follow her husband! But they are the last to think that she would follow their advice.

V. *Dramatic poetry.*

This is perhaps too high a term by which to designate the kind of songs, or other literary productions, which I am going to describe. Primitive folk have no theatre, no elaborate tragedies or comedies. But our tribe certainly possesses the rudiments of a histrionic art in the dances accompanied by songs, which are called *tinsimu ta Ronge*, the songs of Ronge. The word *Ronge* does not seem to be at all related to Ronga. It is applied to an old collection of songs in which dancing played the principal part and which were quite peculiar to the clans of the Coast. They were performed after harvest, when the storehouses were full and when the Ba-Ronga said to their souls: "Eat, drink and be merry!" Boys and girls used to stay in the bush many weeks learning these dances, in a kind of school, which may have taken the place of the circumcision school, which has been suppressed for more than a century in those districts. I say, these songs *were* performed, — because they are now fast disappearing, having been replaced by Zulu songs, called *mudjatu* and *muthimbo*. These are, in their turn, giving way to new dances called *gumpsa*, in which young boys and girls put on milala palm leaf dresses. These were the great novelty in 1908 and pupils of the Mission schools were deserting them to play gumpsa. Another new dance is called *shiloyi*, and consists in the imitation of boatmen: the performers sit down and execute movements similar to those of sailors pulling a boat, with accompaniment of song. The *shindjekandjeka* was another dance executed by the wives of Mubvesha (I, p. 275). Most of these dances take place in the capital, and the Chief summons all the boys to take par in them. It is not absolutely obligatory, but should any one begin the training, and then leave before it is finished, he will

be fined. No doubt these complicated dances are a beginning of the theatre, as will be seen shortly: they at any rate give the impression of an organised ballet.

Many of the songs refer to *historical events* in the life of the clan, or to by-gone occurrences, almost forgotten, and it is for this reason that some of them are so difficult to understand; they also vary from one clan to another. The following, according to Spoon, is the most popular song in Nondwane. An individual performs on a drum to give the time to the dancers. Around the drummer, in a semicircle are arranged the girls who sing the refrains (tekelela), and clap their hands to encourage the soloist (musimi). Farther away, in concentric semi-circles, stand the men of the village, dancing but not singing. Between the two semicircular ranks the soloist has free play. He commences by saying:

Ndji pfumala shigoba sha nakulori.
Why? I haven't got a partner for the dance!

The girls reply:

Hi hlula hi mbilu yi babisaka.
Our hearts are indeed very sad.

He continues:

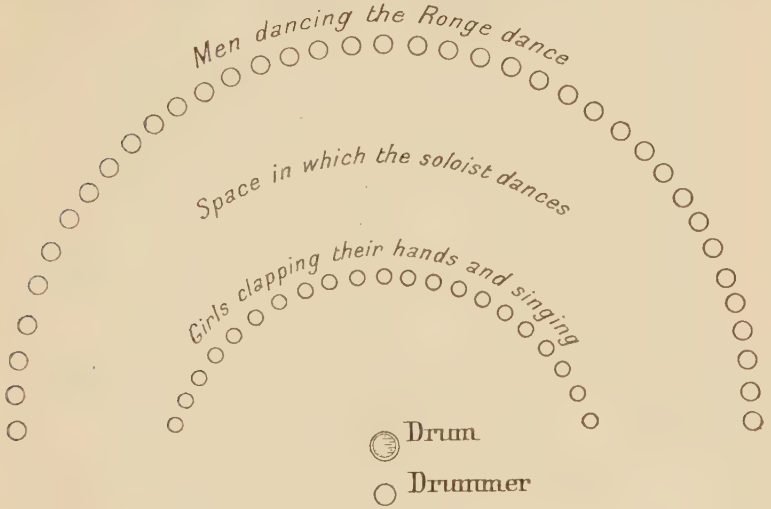
A psi na ntshumu! Makweru Ñwakubyele a fanaka ni pataka dja balungu.
Never mind! My brother Nwakubyele (will do very well), for he shines like one of the Whites' silver pieces!

Ñwakubyele was a Counsellor whose home was about three quarters of an hour from Rikatla. He was probably a famous dancer. The words of this song would hardly seem very inspiring, but the noise of the drum, the clapping of hands, the dancing, — and the flow of beer, — all this helps to account for the intense pleasure which these games afford to the Ba-Ronga.

Another Ronge song is in praise of another dancer:

Ñwahangwa! Ñwahangwa! Loka ba shi bona, shi ne nkaukelo!
Shi bombisa tinsimo ta ku tala ta Ronge!
Nwahangwa! Nwahangwa! When one sees him (one admires) his beautiful figure. . . .
He is the perfect executant of the numberless Ronge songs.

Still another, on the same theme, celebrates Gilela, a choregraphic artist who must have rejoiced in a marvellously slim figure:



The Ronge dance.

U tlanga, Gilela! Wa tlanga, likhalo li fana ni ngoti!
Nwatshibeni! tlanga! tlanga! Ku tjhongo; hi nga tolobele!
Thou dancest, Gilela! Thou dancest and thy waist is no thicker than a string!
Son of Tshimbeni! Dance, dance. — That was too little. — We have not yet had enough!

I came across three other songs which seem to refer to actual historical events, but only one of these is sufficiently comprehensible to be worth transcription. The music of the first phrase is very characteristic. (Tune 37).

Ndji wela, ndji wela, Ñwatembe! Ndji wela, ndji tjike ndji wela.
Ndji koka mabyatsho; ndji tjutjuma, ndji ya tlhasa ka Ntshangane.
Sala muti wa Muhari! — Ndji tjike, ndji wela!

I cross the stream. I cross the stream. Oh Tembe! I cross the stream, let me cross the river!
I tow the boats I fly away as far as Ntshangane.
Adieu, village of Muhari! — Let me cross the river.

The two men of Tembe who sang this song to me, telling me that it was a very popular one, were unable to explain its meaning. It is not difficult however to imagine the circumstances under which it was composed. It probably refers to fugitives, coming from the South, arriving at the Bay of Lourenco Marques, and asking the Coast dwellers, subjects of Muhari (a chief of Tembe in the XVIIIth century), permission to cross the water and to continue their journey northward to Ntshangane (1), that is to say Bilene, where they wanted to take refuge. The memory of their wandering has thus been preserved in a popular song.

These examples will shew that the Ronge repertoire is a varied one, but I have still to transcribe that which, at least to my knowledge, is the most curious number of the whole collection. It was explained to me in detail by Shigiyane who, some fifty years ago in the Shirindja country, in Mpatshiki district, (on the borders of Nondwane), had often taken part in the performance, always in the rôle of soloist. In her opinion it is an entirely typical song. It is no exaggeration to say that it is almost a theatrical production, and we might rightly call it the *Shirindja comedy*. It comprises five parts — I was on the point of saying five acts, — which follow one another, but without, it must be admitted, any kind of logical sequence.

The *First Act* might be entitled " The old men's march ". All the adults of the village go out into the bush, — let us say to the westward, — whence they return to the square, halting and limping and dragging their limbs along, as if suffering from

(1) Ntshangane is a sirname of Manukosi who did not establish himself in Bilene much before 1820 or 1830. But for various reasons it is probable that this name already belonged to an ancient chief of the country, and that Manukosi simply adopted it as sirname. If this song were really dating from the time of Muhari (a chief who reigned in the Tembe clan in the middle of the XVIIIth century), it would be the oldest of the Thonga literary productions yet collected.

some complaint which prevents them walking. To a monotonous air they sing the following words :

Ndji laba batlhaben ! Angati leyi ya masengwe ya tshabisa !
Lomo kweru, mamana, we, angati leyi yi ndji tsimba ku famba;
Ndji teka mumphinyi, ndji tshebukela ku djima,
Yi yengeta yi ndji tsimba ku famba !
Psi yengeta, psi ba roma loko ndji tjhama.
Psi ka ne mpuri, nsasi wa ku famba.
I am looking for some one to put leeches on me! This complaint, this cursed lumbago is terrible !
In our village, Oh ! my mother ! alas ! this trouble prevents me walking.
Take the handle (of my hoe). I start for the fields to till them. — And this thing stops me !
And it annoys (my relatives) to see me sitting down (doing no work). She may well be annoyed, the beauty, the good walker !

During this song, the old folks come to the village ; then the young ones go out, in the opposite direction, returning in due course to sing their verse which forms the second act.

Second Act. Their story is that of a son-in-law, who turned his mother-in-law out of his house, because she was suffering from smallpox. The poor old woman went out to die in the bush, in spite of the protestations of her daughter against her husband's cruelty. The husband and wife are heard giving expression to their feelings:

The son-in-law : (Solo) Ndja famba, ndja famba, na ndji nyenyemuka...
Ba mu hlongola, a famba a ya fela ahangale.
I am going away ! I am going away ! I am going away in disgust !
Let her be turned out and let her go and die in the bush !
The daughter : (her part is sung by all the actors in chorus)
Ndji tjetja shitlambutana, shi fambaka shi hona abuhlambo.
Lomo kweru, ka Mpatshiki, hi nga hanyi ! Hi yabana timpsalo ni mashaka.
Psi yentsha he yo ngati ya kutane !
Ngati ya kutane ya tshabisa, hosi ya nga !
Psa ku hlongola ne mukoñwana, a famba : a -buya a kulubisa ku hlaya, shi hundja hi la, ba mu hlongola, a famba, a ya fela hangale.
I feel pity (when I see) smallpox making its ravages and spoiling the face.
Here, at home, in the village of Mpatshiki we no longer live! We no longer are kind to each other, even amongst relatives.

It is the fault of this terrible disease.
This disease is truly terrible, my lord !
It has driven the son-in-law from his home : he goes, but returns with cruel words The old woman comes this way, she is turned out ; she goes away and dies in the bush !

The Third Act begins when young and old are assembled on the village square. It is a dialogue (shibalekana) introducing a certain Gebuza, a man of Nondwane, who took refuge in Shisindja some time in the middle of the last century, when Zihlahla's warriors led by Machaquene went to fight in Nondwane on behalf of the Whites. This Gebuza was much beloved by Mpatshiki, a sub-chief living in the South of Shirindja, as we shall see in the fifth act. At any rate he was a great dancer, and also possessed a marvellous faculty of saying a great deal and meaning very little ! Listen to the following : a voluble dialogue is kept up between that individual and a young man named Mahlahlane.

Gebuza. Nandjuwe, Mahlahlane ?
Mahlahlane. Ha Makweru !
G. Tlanga, makweru !
M. Utlanga, u ndji tlula, makweru ! A psi na ntshumu.
G. A ndji psi tibanga lepsako, nambe u le makweru, inha ndja ku tlangisile Nhaviyana.

My friend, Mahlahlane ?
Say on, my brother !
Dance, my brother !
You dance better than I do, my brother ! That doesn't matter.
I did not know that, although you are my brother.
I could please you with my dancing, Nhaviyane.

Here the sense begins to be wanting... it concludes with a cross-fire of utterly meaningless remarks.

Mahlahlane. Eee !
Gebuza. Nhaviyana bantsindja.
M. Eee !
G. Nhaviyane basurumana.
Yi banga mahlolana !
Khumbu-khumbu dja Mayingandlela
A siku dja tolo.
Ku ta wa shikumbu sha ndladla
Ndji ndjuluka ndji nha.
Kupa-kupa ha matikeriñwane

That's it !
Nhaviyana, the people of the capital.
That's it !
Nhaviyana, the mahometans.
That works wonders.
? ? ? ? ?
Yesterday.
? ? ? ? ?
I go back, that's what I do.
Etc. etc...

On hearing this extraordinary production, quite as unintelligible as our Swiss children's "empros" -- eena, meena, mina, mo, etc., — the whole company dance in silence, going through various contortions which are doubtless as full of meaning as the dialogue which precedes them.

In the *Fourth Act* all the actors re-enter the stage and commence the *shiombelane*, the hand-clapping with which they so often accompany their songs. They sing the following chorus:

Mamana, n'ta ku yini ?
Ina, hi tlakula Mpatshiki, ñwa-matlanga-ni-tinsana-ta-batjongwana !
He tlanga psigaba, Mpatshiki !
Ntlhamulo, ndji nyike hi psikwembo, ankulweni !
My mother, what shall I say ?
Oh ! yes ! let us praise our Chief Mpatshiki, he who loves to play with little children !
We dance the Ronge dance, Mpatshiki !
The echo (of our songs) comes back to us from the gods all along the whole length of our villages !

Evidently the singers are celebrating the joyous gaiety of this fête, where all are happy, the Chief good-natured, and wherein the gods themselves (the deceased ancestors, probably buried in the sacred wood near the village) join the living.

Fifth Act. A few songs in which Gebuza plays a prominent part, constitute the finale. He was an interminable braggart when once he started on stories of the contests between Nondwane and Zihlahla. Instead of tilling his fields, he idled away his time in his village, in the shade of a nkanye, the tree of bitter fruits (nunge)... Hence the following dialogue :

Gebuza. Tjikan, ndji hlayô !	Let me tell you...
Chorus of Shirindja : U hlaya tshini ?	What silly tales do you want to tell us ?
G. Tjikan, ndi hlayô.	Let me tell you...
Chorus : He baka Bidjiankomo...	We folks of Bidjiankomo (1) (this is what we say) :
Psigaba psi ne nsiku, i ka leyi ;	There is a day for singing, it is to-day ;
A ku djima, a ku psi koti.	As for work, you are incapable of it.
Gebuza ! Ankanÿen lo'kulu lo'wa nunge ; psigaba psi ni nsiku i ka leyi.	Gebuza (you who are lazy), under your big nkanye of bitter fruit there is a day for singing ; this is the day !

(1) The forefathers of Mpatshiki, who was the chief then reigning.

The moral of this is sufficiently obvious: "To-day we sing, we dance: but this is not everything. To-morrow we must start with the tillage for the new year."

Doubtless in each small Ronga clan similar songs and dances are performed. They seem to us exceedingly childish, but also very innocent, and show us what taste these people have for musical and literary productions.

VI. *Action songs, or songs accompanying work.*

I remember having once ordered one of my boys to roll an empty cask, in which we were collecting the rain water. There was a little water in it, and the water was gurgling inside. Rolling it with vigour, the boy imitated the noise of the gurgling all the while, and apparently with great pleasure. Natives are very fond of singing, and shouting, when working; they evidently find a help in the conjunction of music and work.

Many Thonga songs belong to this category. There are songs sung by women when pounding their mealies (I. p. 204), or when carrying their jars of beer or of bukanye to the capital. One of these *psirwalo* songs, extolling Mzila, the hawk that is in heaven, has been quoted I. p. 375. I heard it, in February 1893, when an extraordinary inundation had filled all the little ponds in the hollows, and the lake of Rikatla had increased tenfold. Commencing with the word: "Chwe! Chwe!" a descriptive adverb which renders the impression caused by a wide surface of water shining in the sun, the women sang:

Chwe! Nambyana wu tele! (I. p. 375).
The lake has overflowed!
We seek the hawk who soars in the sky!
Who is the hawk? It is Mzila!

For the music of the song see tune 17.

On the wharf at Lourenço Marques, one could collect a good number of the carrier songs, sung by the boys who carry loads from the ships to the Custom House. Some are

highly impressive, full of guttural sounds like this : Ama-haussa-haussa! There is generally a soloist who intones (sima) and all the boys, covered with dust, clad with sacks, their eyes beaming, seize the heavy piece of iron, the bulky case, raise it rhythmically to their shoulders, and carry it with measured tread to the shed. To have a clever soloist who keeps good time is essential, and I was told that such artists are well paid.

I would remind the reader of the *travellers' songs*, an example of which has been given when speaking of the journeys of the traders in the interior (p. 128).

But the richest collection is that of *sailors' songs*. I heard one of them, (tune 18), on the Nkomati, repeated one hundred times in a monotonous way by a boy who pushed the boat with his pole along the shore, from Morakwen to Lourenço Marques : "I siloyi, I ndandale", he said — (these words have no more meaning than tra-la-la) "They are starving at Ntimane, siloyi..." He was coming from the Ntimane country, near Khosen, and having heard that the crops had failed, he was muttering that great news all down the river! Perhaps the song was not his own composition. It was an old refrain which had been preserved on account of its catching tune.

Mrs Audéoud, during her long journeys on the Maputju river, noted many of their tunes, N^{os} 19-22, some in two or even three parts, curiously harmonised. The Native sailors thus try to vary the monotony of rowing, punting or towing the boat. No doubt a great many more could be collected.

VII. *Incantations.*

Children, as we saw, (I. p. 67), are fond of singing curious little melodies to various animals : to the big *galagala* lizard, to the *chameleon*, to the *crab* with one claw, to the *owl*. The tune of the words addressed to the owl is N° 36. Boys of Rikatla used to salute our ox-waggon, when it appeared on the plain, with song N° 35 : "Gweymanâo! — here are the oxen", they said running all round the span, girls following them and

lifting the babies in their arms, to show them the strange machine and the long-horned oxen, which were walking slowly, with impassive looks, through the little black throng.

Incantations of a more serious character are the *songs of exorcism*, performed with accompaniment of rattles, big tins and drums, close to the ears of the pretended possessed, in order to induce the spirit to reveal its name and to "come out". N° 37 is one of the most celebrated songs of this category, and has really a great deal of character. I shall speak of it again when dealing with possessions.

VIII. *Songs accompanying tales and games.*

As we shall see, little songs are very frequently introduced in the tales to embellish them, and they are generally repeated three or four times over, as if the narrator wanted to exhaust all their charm. Some are very primitive, like N° 33, the murmuring of a little boy who has been swallowed together with his oxen by an ogre called Nyandzumulandengela; imprisoned in the stomach of the monster he entreats him to let him out! Another, more complicated, is the lament of the mother whose child has been stolen by the Baboon, and who follows the animal weeping and asking it to give the child back to her. (Tune N° 35). Tune N° 36 belongs to another ogre tale, of the suitors of pretty girls who are but hyenas transformed into men. Somebody knows their true nature, and forces them to appear as they really are, by chanting their song :

Manyange, the leg belongs to me!

the song in which they dispute with each other about the leg of the girl they woo! The most complicated of these songs is that in the tale of Zili (N° 34); it is a duet, and was sung to me by two Mpfumo girls so distinctly that I could easily take it down. It is very interesting as an illustration of the laws of harmony amongst Thonga.

C. FOLK-TALES

Folk-tales are by far the most interesting and valuable part of the Thonga Folklore, and before citing any new examples of those curious and charming stories, I will try to show their importance in the Life of the Tribe, their literary, ethnographic and philosophic value.

I. *The place occupied by Folk-tales in the Life of the Tribe.*

In Vol. I. p. 319, we have seen the inhabitants of the village, after their evening meal, gathered round the fireplace, devoting themselves to innocent amusements; first, guessing the piece of charcoal, pulling their fingers, asking each other riddles, — those who are beaten in the contest having to pay a forfeit which they redeem by telling a tale. So the tale is the conclusion of the game, the object of the whole entertainment. I have often seen exactly the same sequence followed in an European company playing parlour games.

This interesting scene may be witnessed from one end of the tribe to the other: "This is their evening prayer" said one of our converts to me, a woman who was also a clever story-teller, i. e. as we Christians have our worship every night before going to sleep, so the heathen gladden their hearts by their tales. Everywhere story-telling (ku tha psihitana) is considered the most refined and most pleasing of the games. The tales are called *shihetana* or *nsingo* (mu-mi) in Ronga, *ntyeketo* (mu-mi) or *nkaringana* (mu-mi) in the Northern clans.

Story-tellers are of all ages and of both sexes. I have heard little girls of ten amusing their play-mates with tales. Those I have collected were told by young girls of eighteen (Nkulunkulu and Nwanawatilo), young men of twenty, (Khwezu, Maganyele, Simeon Makwakwa), men of thirty and forty (Spoon, Jim, Tandane); but the majority come from adult women,

the most clever being Shiguyane-Camilla, Sofia, Midomingo, Martha and Lois. Some only know one tale, and repeat it on every occasion, like Jim Tandane, who used to narrate the story of an ogre, Nwatlakulalambimbi, with such gusto that he was sirnamed after his hero! But others can recite six, ten or twenty tales. Shiguyane, for instance, could entertain the company for many nights with her tales, some of which were very long. (See for instance "The little hated one", 24 pages, "Mubia, an ogre tale", 19 pages, in my Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga). This woman's memory was wonderful, and the graceful manner in which she narrated was by no means less astonishing. Nkulukulu had heard *her* tale ("The girl and the whale") only once in the Maputju country, and she had memorised it at once with the little songs which enliven it.

Phot. A. Borel.

Martha, a Ronga story-teller.

Strange to say, there is a curious precaution to be taken in connection with story-telling : it is taboo to devote oneself to this occupation at noon ; it must remain an evening entertainment; if this rule is not followed, the transgressor will become bald ! This is one of the most astonishing of the lesser taboos of the tribe. What is its origin? Have the Natives noticed that famous story-tellers, those who practised their art day and night, were liable to this misfortune? I could get no information on this point. I rather think the prohibition comes from

the fact that this game is so much appreciated that they are afraid to devote too much time to it : people would lose all inclination for work, should they start it during the day. So they instinctively prohibited story-telling in the day-time!

Another curious custom in connection with tales is this: when a story-teller comes to the end of his tale, he concludes with the following words. "Tju-tju... famba ka Gwamba ni Dzabane!" — "Run away, go to Gwamba and Dzabane." These two personages are believed to be, at least amongst the Northern clans, the first man and the first woman (see Part VI), and I suppose that the object of this kind of incantation is to prevent the marvellous story haunting the hearers during the night, and troubling their sleep by disagreeable dreams. It is a means of return from fairy land to the realms of every-day life! All these details tend to show the importance of folk tales in the Native life, and their popularity amongst the tribe!

II. *Classification of Thonga Folklore and its literary value.*

But of what does this folklore consist? How is it possible that men, girls, youngsters, sit quietly for hours, listening to an old woman who keeps them under the spell of her tale? In fact, these products of primitive imagination are much more varied than would at first appear. Let us open the casket, whose key is kept by Gwamba and Dzabane, and make an inventory of the "treasury" of this lore, to use the words of the Rev. Jacottet in his publications regarding the Ba-Suto.

It would certainly be pretentious to apply a strictly philosophical, or even literary, classification to our tales. However, it is obvious that they present many different styles which are often combined, it is true, but which it is quite possible to differentiate.

1) The first and most noteworthy class is that of *animal folk tales*, in which the "Romance (1) of the Hare" takes a pro-

(1) I employ this term *Romance* in the same sense as the corresponding French term is used when speaking of the "Roman du Renard", the cele-

minent place; the Hare, the Tortoise and the Small Toad are seen to play clever tricks upon huge beasts such as the Elephant, the Lion, the Hippopotamus and even upon men, getting the better of them by their cunning.

2) In a second category, the same idea of the victory of the little ones over powerful enemies, is illustrated by stories in which human beings, children, miserable, despised ones, triumph over their elders and those who hate them. The type of such tales, amongst us, is Cinderella. Thonga have a lot of similar stories, which I would entitle *the wisdom of the little ones*.

3) The third category comprises the *Ogre tales*, where the triumph of the wisdom of feeble creatures over these disgusting and cruel beings is again celebrated.

4) Other tales, which I might adorn with the name of *moral tales*, are stories which are evidently intended to enforce some moral teaching. The moralising aim may be unconscious, but the conclusion of the tales is undoubtedly moral, showing, as it does, that bad deeds or bad characters meet with due punishment.

5) Another variety of stories of this kind, though they are called tales and told as such, seem to have been *actual facts* which happened somewhere, and have been preserved in the memory of the tribe. But they are not considered as real historical traditions. Being told for the entertainment of the hearers, no difference is made between them and ordinary tales. These cannot be called legends, a legend being an historical fact, transformed by the popular imagination, and held as such by those who narrate it. They are rather the contrary of legends, being regarded *as purely imaginative*, while the facts seem to be more or less historic.

6) The last category of the Thonga folk-tales are the *foreign tales*, which have come from Moslem, Portuguese or English sources, but have been altered in a very curious way, thus affording interesting material for the study of the Native mind. Foreign infiltrations can be detected even in those tales which

brated series of deeds performed by Reynard the Fox, the well-known product of mediaeval literature.

bear most distinctly the Bantu character, but in this last category, they seem to constitute the very subject matter of the story.

These six classes, once more, are by no means sharply defined. A tale might be placed in two or three of them. An animal sometimes appears in a tale where the other actors are all human. Though the animal folklore is generally absolutely devoid of moral intent, some moral idea may be detected in some episodes, for instance, when we see the Elephant punished for having contemptuously crushed the spawn of the Small Toad, etc.

The literary value of these stories varies greatly according to the story itself, and to the narrator. Some tales are very short and insignificant, or they may be a hap-hazard accumulation of episodes without any plan. Others are *real compositions* in which there is order and design, a treatise and a conclusion. I recommend the perusal of the "Epopee of the Small Toad" and the story of the "Little Hated One", in "Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga". They are amongst the best and most elaborate examples of Bantu folklore, and disclose a real literary talent. Very often, as already mentioned, *a little song* or some little songs form the framework of the story. They are repeated at least three times, the story-teller arranging his narrative in such a way that the refrain recurs again and again. Native speakers do not fear repetition ; they seem to think that to hear a catching tune once only is not sufficient, and that upon a second or third time it will be more appreciated. So they make of repetition a real art. It may make the recital somewhat monotonous, but this literary procedure is by no means tedious. Some one once said to me, after having heard the tale of Nabandji, the toad-eating girl : "I would never have thought there could be so much charm in monotony!"

As regards the *narrators*, they also differ greatly from each other. Some of them, the beginners, are dull, slow, annoying. They intermingle the episodes without any order, frequently supposing things to be known which have not before been mentioned. But others are full of life, and one feels a true literary pleasure in listening to them. It was a real treat, for in-

stance, to hear Shiguyane, Spoon, his wife, and Simeon Makwakwa! Their gestures, their mimicking, their physionomy, the wealth of descriptive adverbs thrown into the narration, added a great interest to the story. They imitated little children, or old people who had no teeth, with great effect. I even saw Spoon's wife have recourse to *imitative action* in order to increase the charm of one of the songs, No. 36, a kind of incantation by which deceitful suitors are transformed into hyenas. This song, according to the story, was sung by a woman whilst grinding her mealies. So Magugu brought with her an earthenware mortar, and vigorously worked with her pestle each time the song was repeated. Listeners seemed to take great delight in this performance.

III. *The Ethnographic Value of the Tales.*

When asked the origin of the tales they tell, Thonga invariably say: "These are old stories which we heard from our fathers. No one would dream of originating a tale nowadays". This assertion is certainly true. Bantu tales are very old. It is not without good cause that story-tellers, when afraid of being haunted by the harrowing details, send them back to Gwambe and Dzabane, the first man and the first woman!

Another fact comes to confirm the testimony of the Natives, showing, at the same time, the ethnographic value of the tales. It has been noticed when comparing tales collected in various parts of South Africa, that there is a great similarity amongst them. Bantu folklore, whatever may be the differences met with amongst the tribes, possesses a real unity. More than that: this similarity is found in the folk-tales of all mankind. A number of stories seem to spread from one end of the planet to the other. Reviewing my book "Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga", in the "Revue des Traditions populaires" of June 1898, Mr. René Basset, the man who is perhaps the greatest authority in this domain, showed that certain episodes written in Lourenço Marques, at the dictation of a Ronga story-teller,

were to be found in the folklore of the ancient Greeks and Romans, of the modern Germans, French, Greeks, Italians, Lithuanians, Siberians, Kirghizes, Indians; in Brazil, Portugal, the Punjab, Scotland, Roumania, Guatemala, British Guiana, Morocco, etc! This is really a wonderful phenomenon and it is very difficult to account for it. Three explanations may be given of this fact, which is one of the most interesting problems of Ethnography :

1) These stories belong to primitive humanity, and all the races have taken them with them in their migrations.

2) Or there has been, in a more or less remote past, direct contact between the various human races, by means of which the tales have been transmitted from one tribe to another, in such a way that, in the course of time, they have spread all over the world.

3) There is such a similarity in the minds of the various races, when still in the primitive phase of their development, that they have all invented the same stories independently of each other. Hence the unity of folklore everywhere.

I do not think any one of these explanations excludes the others. There is probably a portion of truth in each of them. The difficulty is to define that portion exactly, and this cannot be done as long as we have not more material at hand. For South Africa we have already a great deal of information owing to the works of Callaway, Theal, Torrend for the Zulu-Kafirs, Bleak and Mrs Lloyd for the Hottentots and Bushmen, Casalis, Arbousset, Jacottet for the Ba-Suto, and mine for the Thonga. But there is still more to be collected. I am under the impression that, having now collected about fifty Thonga tales of different lengths, amounting to a total of 300 pages, in-8vo size, I only possess a fifth, or perhaps a tenth part of the whole folklore of our tribe!

However Science cannot wait until all the tales have been reduced to writing and published. It will try to come to a conclusion as soon as possible, and perhaps the best plan for it would be to restrict the field of investigation, and to work thoroughly one, at least, of the

regions of this wide land. This is the suggestion I would take the liberty of making to my fellow-inquirers in the field of Bantu folklore. Let us choose a characteristic portion of it, for instance, that which I have called the "Romance of the Hare", which is more clearly defined than any other section of this primitive and oral literature. Let all the episodes of this long story be first published in a form which may be regarded as typical, preferably in the form in which they are found in any one given tribe; let a short résumé of each be made and given a distinguishing number by which it will be henceforth known. Then let a folklorist, if he has the necessary time and information at his disposal, conduct the following inquiry : — In which tribes are those episodes met with? How do they differ from the typical version? Do they appear outside Africa (amongst American Negroes, for instance)? This inquiry would throw light on many important points, viz., what is strictly Bantu in the "Romance of the Hare", and what is common to other races? Are there episodes which belong to one tribe only, to a group of tribes only, or to tribes widely separated from each other? To what extent do the wording and the contents differ? Are there not new episodes invented, possibly unconsciously, in recent times by Native story-tellers? I think, when this is accomplished, important conclusions might be drawn which would greatly assist Ethnography in the solution of this problem, and of many questions bearing on primitive humanity.

I hope later on to publish the résumé, and the classification, of the 56 episodes of the "Romance of the Hare", which I have collected. I may be able to complete this collection, as I know that a number of other stories are told about the "Wily Trickster", as the Thonga call him ! This attempt may serve as a starting point for the inquiry which I propose, and should this inquiry ever be conducted on an extended scale, under the auspices of the S.A.A.A.S., for instance, and the result published in its Journal, the Science of Folklore would certainly greatly profit by such an undertaking.

The antiquity of the tales is beyond any doubt : they are old, very old. However this antiquity is only relative : that is to say they are constantly transformed by the narrators and their transformations go much farther than is generally supposed, farther even than the Natives themselves are aware of. After having heard the same stories told by different story-tellers, I

must confess that I never met with exactly the same version. First of all *words* differ. Each narrator has his own style, speaks freely and does not feel in any way bound by the expressions used by the person who taught him the tale. It would be a great error to think that, writing a story at the dictation of a Native, we possess the recognized standard form of the tale. There is no standard at all! For this reason I cannot attribute any great importance to the *texts* of the tales. They are examples of the language as spoken by so and so in such and such a district, and therefore have a linguistic value, just as any report or address they may make or deliver. But they are by no means stereotyped texts, transmitted as such from the old times. The words of the songs, which occasionally accompany the narration are probably the most ancient and unchangeable element of the tales. They are often half Zulu, in those tales which have been borrowed from the neighbouring tribe, and contain archaic expressions. Some sentences also, especially when they are quota tions, bear the same character and are reproduced by different narrators under an identical form; for instance, when the Small Toad, Shinana, places its eggs on the road and says, as a kind of defiance : "Let the passer-by pass. If he crushes them, let him crush them. If he spares them, let him spare them". I heard this sentence repeated in almost exactly the same terms by two Thonga, one from Khosen, the other from Rikatla. But these fixed elements are rare and, as a rule, Natives change the words with the greatest freedom.

The same can be said with regard to *the sequence of the episodes;* although these often form definite cycles, it is rare to hear two narrators follow exactly the same order. They arrange their material as they like, sometimes in a very awkward way. The tricks of the Hare are sometimes attributed to the Small Toad. In the Zulu folklore they are all given as the deeds of a dwarf, called Hlakanyana. I have heard Natives mixing up elements of a totally different style. For instance, in the ritornello of the "Hare's Hoe", which will be found later on and belongs to the animal or semi-animal folklore, the conclusion is borrowed from the well-known episode of the "Year of Fa-

mine", which belongs to the class of moral tales (or tales originating from an historic fact). New combinations thus constantly take place, sometimes absurd when the literary sense is wanting.

I go further : *New elements* are also introduced, owing to the tendency of Native story-tellers always to apply circumstances of their environment to the narration. This is one of the charms of Native tales. They are living, viz., they are not told as if they were past and remote events, in an abstract fashion, but considered as happening amongst the hearers themselves, the names of listeners being often given to the heroes of the story, which is, so to speak, forced into the frame of the ordinary life. So all the new objects brought by civilisation are, without the slightest difficulty, made use of by the narrator. He speaks of rifles and guns, of square houses and of clothing, which were not dreamt of by the ancient authors of the tales, and that not only in tales which are distinctly of a foreign origin but also in those which are thoroughly Bantu. Thus Magugu, Spoon's wife, in her tale about the hyena-suitors, which otherwise bears a strong Bantu character, concluded by showing the girl, the heroine of the story, coming to the Missionary Station to be married in the Church! There is not the remotest shadow of historic or ethnographic criticism in the mind of Bantu story-tellers : hence the changes which constantly deform old traditions.

Lastly, my experience leads me to think that, in certain cases, the *contents of the stories* themselves are changed by oral transmission, this giving birth to numerous versions of a tale, often very different from each other and sometimes hardly recognisable. See, for instance, the splendid tale of Zili which I am now publishing : a man kills his wife and cuts her flesh into strips which he gives his relatives-in-law to eat. A bird reveals his crime by a little song ; he is found out, and put to death with his whole family. The theme is very popular, and forms one of the most typical moral tales. I possess a version of the story in which it is the wife who calls her parents and, with their help, kills her husband, because he was ill-treating her.

They cut off the flesh and hang it in strips on the fence of the village. The husband's mother comes to pay a visit to her grandson, and they give her the poor man's flesh to eat. She stays in the village many days wondering why they treat her to meat of which they do not partake. When she expresses her astonishment, they say to her : " We kept it for you ! " When returning home, having taken a provision of meat with her, the old woman hears a bird singing :

Tsenengu ! tsenengu ! There is one who fell down !
He fell down on the square of the village,
His flesh hangs and swings ;
It is that which you carry on your head.

This song is totally different from the one in Zili. The bird repeats it until she understands the words, and then she cries :

My son ! Alas ! Alas !

The source of the two stories is evidently the same, but what great differences between them ! Such alterations have evidently taken place, and are still taking place, every day in the Bantu folklore.

How far can these alterations go ? To answer this question I would ask my readers to study the charming tale which I entitle the "Epopee of the Small Toad " (Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga, p. 109). What I call the Small Toad is not our little European green frog but a curious Batracian, the Breviceps mossambicus, in Ronga the *shinana*. It can swell up to double its natural size and cover itself with an exudation which keeps its enemies away. It can bury itself in the ground during the winter, and comes out in spring. This interesting little animal is, in the Ronga folklore, the equal of the Hare, and even surpasses it. Some of its great deeds are the same as those well known in the " Romance of the Hare ". The Small Toad begins by killing an antelope by its tricks, and uses its horn as a trumpet to deceive the other beasts. This brings about a fight between the Small Toad and the Hippopotamus, followed by another one between it and the Elephant, which

has wilfully crushed its eggs. The Small Toad, accompanied by the Chameleon, forges assagais, kills the Elephant, and all the beasts make their submission. So it becomes a Great Chief. It seems that the presence in the sandy country of Delagoa Bay of this kind of Batracians with its curious habits, coupled with the example of the Ngoni chiefs who subjugated the clans of the coast by warlike expeditions, has given birth in our tribe to a new modern type of folklore, the type of the Breviceps: all the tricks previously and still told of the Hare are attributed to it, though it keeps its own definite character, viz., that of a warrior. If this be true, there has been a *real creation*, though most of the elements of the "Epopée of the Small Toad" were previously in existence.

As a conclusion I would say: — The Bantu tales are very old, at least the material of which they are formed is very ancient. But they are still a plastic matter unconsciously undergoing constant and extensive modifications in the hands of the story-tellers. These facts are interesting to note, as they show what are the conditions of literary production amongst uncivilised tribes. This production is *essentially collective:* tales are not created, on all sides, by individual authors; but they are modified, altered and enriched, as they are transmitted from one person to another, from one tribe to another, from one race to another, to such an extent that new types, new combinations, are adopted and a true development takes place. This is obvious if, in addition to these transformations, that which I call the fifth category truly exists, viz., if it be true that facts which really happened are told in such a way that they come to be classed amongst the fabulous. So it is quite possible that the impression felt by all the story-tellers that all the tales are ancient, that the era of creation has passed, is after all erroneous or, at any rate, only relatively true. A development still takes place and it has perhaps never been more active than now. If this be correct, the hypothesis of Callaway, that our tribes have passed through a stage of greater literary production than now apparent cannot be maintained.

IV. *The Moral and Philosophical Value of the Tales.*

In some of the Thonga tales the moral lesson is so clear that I did not hesitate to make a special category, the moral tales. They are as wide-spread as the others. I do not pretend that those who tell them intend to moralize. But the teaching naturally arises from the narratives, and it would be worth while studying them to extract therefrom a kind of code of Native elementary morals. In them we see a just punishment following on faults, such as : the *curiosity* of Namashuke (Chants et Contes p. 22); the *jealousy* of Mutipi's friends (p. 158); and of Longoloka (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 327) ; *theobstinacy* of Sidiulu's wife ; the *unkindness* of an elder sister (p. 229); the *presumption* of a younger sister (p. 337); the *disobedience* of Halandi (p. 242) and of the elder brother in the "Disobedient child and the Snake" ; the *self-confidence* of a man who marries against his parents' will (p. 246); the *laziness* of the wives (p. 257); the *selfishness* of the husband (p. 260) the *homicide* of Zili. On the other hand we also see *kindness rewarded*, and also *pity*, in a tale not yet published, told in connection with that of The disobedient child. (1)

The animal folklore and the Ogre tales seem to be absolutely devoid of such moral lessons. But, as we have already pointed out, they are all more or less illustrations of the triumph of

(1) After having told how the little child saved his disobedient brother, (see later on), the narrator goes on with a totally different story which had originally certainly no connection with the other episode. During the time of famine, the child who was now several years older, went away to another country. A headman received him, and ordered one of his wives to take care of him, but she refused, saying that her own children had nothing to eat. All the others did the same except one who consented to feed him. The child sowed seeds of all kinds and, his enchanted hoe having tilled large fields in a moment, a splendid harvest was the result, and the store houses of his adopted mother were well filled. The others said : "If we had only accepted him !" On his way home, he killed an army and took their assagaies, killed a troop of merchants and seized their loads of goods, killed all his relatives and took their hoes, — an episode which resembles that of the conclusion of Mutipi's tale. (Chants et Contes p. 160.)

wisdom over mere brute force. This seems to be the essential idea of all this folklore, and is not this indeed a highly moral and philosophical idea ?

To illustrate this very interesting thesis the story-tellers, in the first instance, narrate the doings of the animals, choosing for the heroes of their tales the smallest and most defenceless thus the Hare, the cunning trickster, up to all sorts of dodges; the Small Toad, cold and calculating; the Chameleon, with its crafty prudence. The same idea runs through the group of stories which I have called " the wisdom of the little ones "; those who were thought to be dullards, the disinherited, and the hated, end by succeeding better in life than their persecutors, of whom they often become the benefactors. On the other hand the Ogres, as representing brute force and all that is merely material, are defeated, receive punishment for their misdeeds and are generally cut open (to provide an exit for the victims they have swallowed !). So the exaltation of wisdom or goodness is clearly noticeable in almost all the tales, and even foreign tales seem to shew, under more or less exotic colourings, that they owe their origin to the same thought. The African story-teller undoubtedly endeavours, above all, to interest his hearers by picturesque, laughable or sensational recitals : but, consciously or unconsciously, he is certainly doing work the philosophical bearing of which is undeniable.

Why is it that this theme of the triumph of knowledge over strength reappears so frequently and under so many aspects in this popular literature ? Doubtless because the thought is natural and eminently satisfying to the mind of man. It underlies our fairy tales of *Cinderella*, of *Hop o'my thumb* and many other European fables and stories. But may there not have been, in regard to the African tribes, some special circumstances which contributed to the evolution of this idea, and impelled them to give vent to it in a hundred different ways ?

Among the Bantus, the Chief is all powerful. Surrounded by Counsellors, protected by warriors always ready to do his bidding, he is an autocrat with power of life and death over his subjects, especially where the primitive clan has evolved into a

confederation of tribes united by military power. If the Bantu clan is in a way democratic, the hierarchy is, however, all powerful in its midst. Before the Chief and before the invincible custom of which he is the representative, every one bows and trembles In every village the headman possesses similar powers over his subordinates, and elder brothers reign as despots over the younger. From the top to the bottom of the social ladder the strong dominate over the weak and combine, in a wonderful way, to assure the submission of the inferior. In the evening, round the fire, the women and the children take their revenge in the Black man's usual way, i e., by saying what they think in a round about manner. They do not try to upset the existing state of affairs! Far from it! But they take a malicious pleasure in telling of the clever tricks of the Hare and his associates! Why? Because Mr. Hare represents the little one, the subject, the ordinary private individual, who has received no special advantages, either by birth or nature, and yet who, by his own personal wit or common sense, gets the better of the great ones of the community and even of the chiefs. Is it a mere coincidence that three of the tales I have collected conclude with the death of a chief brought about by the machiavellian acuteness of that rascal, the Hare? Or, sometimes, it is the youngest sister, who figures in the story; the despised one, covered with a loathsome skin disease; the insignificant little goat-herd; the son of the neglected wife; all of whom accomplish grand doings, altogether unexpectedly.

I see in these stories, as it were, a discreet protest of weakness against strength, a protest of spiritual against material force; possibly they may contain a warning to those in power from those who suffer. And who knows if their ultimate object be not to assert the value of the individual, in the midst of this down-trodden people where the individual counts for nothing? If this be so, then African folklore possesses a greater and more philosophical value than would appear at first sight. In the collective state of human society it represents an aspiration to a state of things where the individual will have his due place. In this way, it is prophetic. It can no longer be classed merely

as an amusement for old women during the long evenings, or as a more or less intellectual parlour-game : it is a monument upon which the soul of the race has recorded, unconsciously perhaps, its ideas and its aspirations. It is thus doubly worthy of our study.

The scope of this book does not allow me to publish more than one or two tales of each category, and I must also abstain from any technical treatment of them, leaving the work of annotation and comparison to professional folklorists. My aim is to describe the South African tribe and they will be a sufficient illustration, as they are, of its psychic life.

V. *The Animal Folklore.*

I have published nearly thirty episodes of the Romance of the Hare in the works already refered to; those which I collected in later years form three cycles : that of the *wily trickster*, a collection of episodes told by Martha and heard by her in the Maputju country; the most noteworthy describe the victory of the Hare over the Lion ; *the Hare and the Lion*, told by Simeon Makwakwa of Bilen, containing episodes quite different from those of the first cycle ; *the Hare and the Baboon*, written for me by one of my pupils, Mbike Dzengen from Khosen, a very amusing story also known in Bilen with some variations. To these three cycles I have added the story of the Hare's Hoe, a curious specimen of a popular literary genus, the ritornello, or anadiplosis which is not frequently met with in the Bantu folklore.

1) Ñwashisisana, the Hare. (1)

The Hare, that wily trickster (2) went to live with the Grey Antelope (3). One day he said to her : "Suppose we go and till our fields

(1) For the English translation of this and most of the following tales I am greatly indebted to Mr. G. D. Fearon. I am sorry space does not allow me to give the Thonga text.

(2) Ñwashisisana is the surname for the Hare, which is generally called Ñwampfundla. The word is derived from the verb *shisa* to deceive.

(3) Ñwamhunti, the duyker of the Boers.

and plant some beans ! " So off they went, and set to work. The Antelope stole the Hare's beans, and the Hare stole the Antelope's beans, but the Hare did the most of the stealing.

The Hare set a trap in his field, and the Antelope was caught by the leg. In the early morning the cunning rascal went out and found the Antelope caught in the trap : — " Don't you think you deserve to be killed " said he, " now that I have found you out ?" — " No ! No ! " replied she. " Let me go, and we will go back to my house, where I will give you a hoe ". So he let her go, and she gave him the hoe.

The Hare then packed his beans, harvested all his fields, and made ready to be off : — " Good-bye ", said he to the Antelope, " I won't stay with you any longer, you are a thief ! "

* * *

He soon came across the Great Lizard, the Varan (Ñwakhwahle) lying at the edge of a water hole. It was the Chief's water hole, where they drew their water, and he had been placed there on guard to find out who it was that was continually disturbing it, and making it muddy : — " What are you doing here ? " said the Hare. — " I am watching this hole to see who it is that muddies the chief's water ". — " I'll tell you what ", said the Hare, " we had much better go and till a field together ". — " How can I dig ? " said the Varan, " I can't stand on my hind legs and hold the hoe in my fore-paws. " — " That doesn't matter : just you come along ; I will tie the hoe to your tail, and you will be able to dig beautifully ". So the hoe was tied on ; but when this was done, the Varan couldn't move. Then the Hare ran back to the hole, drank his fill of water, and finished by stirring it up well, making it as muddy as possible. After this he walked all over the Varan's fields, and regaled himself on his ground-nuts. In the heat of the day he came back and said : — " Ho ! an army has passed through the country. I hear that the warriors have dirtied the water in the hole... I hear too that they have ravaged all your crop of ground-nuts ! " — " Untie me " said the Varan, " I can't budge ". — " All right, but only on condition that you don't go and accuse me, the Hare, of having stirred up the water ". — " But who told you this story about those soldiers who did all the mischief ?" — " Don't ask me so many questions ; if you do, I won't untie you !" —" Very well ! I'll be quiet ; but take away this hoe ; it hurts me ! " —

" Listen ! first of all I'll go and draw some water for you. You must be thirsty ". — " No, I'm not thirsty. Only let me go ! " — " If you are not thirsty, all right ! I won't untie the hoe ". — " Oh ! very well I am thirsty. Hurry up, and come back as fast as you can ".

The Hare went to the Varan's village, took the wooden goblet he always drank out of, drew some water, and once again stirred up the hole. He took a drink to the Varan, and said to him : " If any one asks you whether I have disturbed the water, you must say that you did it. If you don't promise me this, I won't untie you. " — " All right ! Very well. " Then the Hare ran to call the chiefs : Lord Elephant (ñwandlopfu), Lord Lion (ñwandjawandjawana) and the rest. They all came and asked the Varan : " Who has been drawing our water and making it all muddy ? " — " It is I, " said the Varan ; and the rascal of a Hare added : " Yes, I found him committing this crime, and I tied him up to a hoe, so that he couldn't run away. "

The chiefs congratulated the Hare : " Ah ! you have been very clever ! You have discovered the villain who has been muddying our pond ! " And they immediately killed the Varan.

The wily trickster took the hoe, and went to look for the Grey Antelope (ñwamhunti). She was on sentry duty, on the edge of a pool, for guards were placed at all the pools to prevent any one approaching, as the water still continued to be muddied during the night. The Hare, not being able to get anything to drink, said to the Antelope : " What are you doing there, close to the water ? " — " I am guarding the Chief's pool ". — " You will all get thin and die of hunger, if you stay like that at the edge of the pools Listen ! You would do much better to come with me, and till a field ; then, in time of famine, you would have something to eat ". — " Let us go ! " said the Antelope.

The Hare set to work in grand style. He gave the Antelope a hoe and told her to dig too — " I can't get on my hind legs, " said she, " and hold the hoe with my forelegs ". — " Let me have a look at your forelegs : I'll tie the hoe to them, and you will be able to dig all right. " The Antelope tried, but she couldn't do it. — " Never mind ", said the Hare. " Wait a minute ". He ran back to the pool, quenched his thirst, and muddied the water. Then he filled a calabash, and hid it in the bush. On returning to the Antelope, he said : " Hello ! Haven't you done any hoeing yet ? " — " No, I can't manage it. " — " Would you believe it ? An army has passed by, and they have stirred up the pool. " — " No ! Truly ? Untie me, Hare ! " — " I won't

untie you unless you swear that what I said is true. " — " Very well ! Untie me ". Off he went to get the calabash to give her a drink, and made her promise to confess that it was she who had disturbed the water ; then he called the Chiefs, who killed the Antelope.

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But there was one creature, that outdid the Hare in cunning, and that was the Tortoise (ñwamfutju). She mounted guard at the pond. The Hare arrived on the scene. — " You will all die of hunger, if you stay at the edge of the pools with nothing to do. We had much better go and till a field together. " — " How can I hoe with such short legs ? " — " Oh ! that will be all right. I'll show you how to do it. " — " Eh ! no thank you ! I think not ! " — " Well then ! let's go and help ourselves to some of the Wild Boar's sweet potatoes. " — " No ", said the Tortoise uncompromisingly, " no pilfering ! "

However, before very long, she began to feel hungry, so much so that, when the Hare again proposed a marauding expedition, she overcame her scruples, and they went off together to root up the sweet potatoes. Then they lit a fire of grass in the bush and roasted them. — " Tortoise ", said the Hare, " just go and see if the owners of these fields are anywhere about, as we must not let them catch us. " — " Yes, but let us both go. You go one way and I'll go the other. " Off went the Hare, but the Tortoise, instead of following his example, stayed behind and crawled into his wallet. The Hare soon came back, filled up his wallet with sweet potatoes, threw it over his back and ran away to escape the proprietors, shouting at the top of his voice : " Hi, Tortoise ! Look out ! They will catch you ! I'm off ! Fly ! " He ran as hard as he could to escape capture ; the Tortoise, inside the sack, ate the sweet potatoes ; she picked out all the best ones and finished the lot ! She said (descriptive adverb), " kutlu ". After a while the Hare was tired out, and lay down quite exhausted. He felt the pangs of hunger. — " Aha ! " said he to himself, " I will have a good feed ! " He sat down in a shady spot, opened his wallet, put his hand inside, and pulled out one very small sweet potato. — " This is much too small for me " said he, and, putting his hand in again, felt a nice big one. — " Oho ! here's a beauty ! " When he had pulled it out of his bag, what was his surprise to find that his prize turned out to be... Mistress Tortoise. — " Hello ! (He shoyawe !) Why ! it's you ! " he cried in disgust, and threw her on the ground. She scuttled away as

fast and as far as she could. The Hare began to weep : — " When I think that I have been carrying her all this time ! ..." He felt very crestfallen.

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Continuing his travels he next met King Lion surrounded by his courtiers. He, at once, asked permission to *nkonza*, viz., to swear allegiance to the King, and to settle in his country. But every day he went out to steal other folk's ground-nuts. When the owners of the fields came to look at their crops, they exclaimed : " Who can it be that digs up our ground-nuts ? The Hare went off to find the Lion, and said to him : " Sire, your subjects are not what they should be (a ba lulamanga), for they are in the habit of stealing ". — " You don't say so ?" said the Lion. " Go and keep watch, and if you discover any one stealing, catch him. "

The Hare went off to take up his position in the fields, but the Lion followed him, and surprised him in the very act of feasting on ground-nuts. — " Ha ! ha ! You tell me that my subjects are not honest folks, while it is you who do the thieving ! "— " Not at all ! I was only keeping a look out ! Come here, and I will show you the footprints of your subjects, for I know them well ! "

So they went to a large shady banyan tree. The Hare made a strong string of one of the long tendrils (lisiha), and said to the Lion : " As you think I don't speak the truth, just sit down here and you will soon see the thieves passing by ; I will wile away the time by making you a crown of wax (khehla ngiyana. I. p. 129)". — " All right", said the Lion, " make me a crown ". The Hare began by parting the Lion's mane down the middle and arranging the hairs carefully, one by one, on either side of his neck, as if he were preparing a spot on the top of his head for the crown. Then he made holes through the bark of the tree, on both sides of the trunk, and passed the hairs of the mane right through them, some on one side, some on the other. This done, he tied all the hairs securely together at the back of the tree with the string he had made, and said to the Lion : " I've finished the job. Jump up quickly and you will see one of your subjects stealing in the fields ! " The Lion tried to jump up. He couldn't ! He half killed himself struggling to get on his feet ! The Hare ran to the village. — " Come ", he shouted, " and see who it is who ravages your fields ! " He had previously torn up a lot of ground-nut leaves and thrown them down close to the Lion.

The villagers hurried to the spot. — " There ! don't you see him ? Haven't I found him out ? eh ?" The Lion didn't dare to say a single word. Then his subjects cut great staves and beat him to death : — " Ah ! Hare, you are very clever, and we are very grateful ! " said they.

* * *

The Hare cut the Lion up in pieces ; then he took the skin and wrapped himself in it ; thus disguised, he went to the Lion's village and entered the Queen's hut. He said : " I am not well ", and shut himself up refusing to see anyone. He gave orders to the servants to kill an ox because he was ill ; then he had a second one slaughtered, then a third ! The women said to him : " Are you going to move to another place, as you are killing all your oxen ? " — " No " said he, " I have no intention of moving anymore. I am killing them because I know very well that I shall never get over this illness ". So he had a general slaughtering of all the Lion's oxen, goats and sheep, to the very last head of cattle. When all were killed, he said to the Queen : " Haven't you got my money in your keeping ? — " Yes " she replied. — " Well, bring it all out, and put it, together with my royal mat, and all my valuables, on the village square ".

The Lion's skin was becoming rather odoriferous, the flies were settling upon it in swarms, and the Hare was by no means comfortable inside it. — " What sort of complaint have you got ? " said the Queen, " it is something that smells very nasty ". — " Oh ! I have only got some sores, I must go and find a doctor. Good-bye : I shall start at once ". The Lion's wife replied : " Then I will go with you, my husband. — " No ", said he, " no occasion for that, for I know exactly where I must go ". He went out on to the square, picked up the mat in which all the money and valuables had been packed ; then throwing off the Lion's skin, he tore away as fast as his legs could carry him with all the village in pursuit !

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He came to a burrow, and in he ran. The pursuers got a hooked stick to pull him out ; they tried to hook him and managed to get hold of his leg. — " Oh ! pull away ! " cried he, " pull away ! you've only got hold of the root of a tree ! " So they left of pulling, and

had another try. This time they really hooked on to a root — " Hi ! hi ! " he yelled, " Hi ! hi ! take care ! you're hurting me ! Your're killing me ! Ow ! Ow ! "... They all pulled as hard as they could, and pulled and pulled until the hook broke and they all fell over backwards ; they said : " Qaa ", (descriptive adv). Finally they were tired out and said : " Oh ! let us give it up and leave him where he is ! " So they stopped up the burrow with a bunch of grass and went away.

The South wind sprang up, and blew the grass deeper into the burrow. — " I am done for ", said the Hare to himself, as he fancied they were succeeding in getting nearer to him. He was suffering the pangs of hunger and was terribly thirsty, but did not dare to leave the burrow, supposing his enemies to be close at hand. At length he cried out : " Have pity on me and let me go, my good fathers (ba baba), I beseech you ! " He crept cautiously towards the entrance to the burrow, and found only a bunch of grass. Then he made off at once, leaving all his treasures behind him, and not even giving them a single thought.

* * *

He ran on and on. He became thin and ill. He ate grass, but it did not remain in his inside : it passed through him immediately. He came to the home of the Grey Antelope. — " Say, Antelope, suppose we sew one another up ! You stitch me up, but not completely, you know ! It will keep the grass much longer in our insides when we browse, and we shall get much more nourishment out of it. " She consented, and stitched him up partially He sewed her up entirely. The Antelope swelled and died. But, fortunately for her, she fell in a field belonging to a woman who picked her up, put her in her basket, on the top of her head, and carried her to the village to be eaten. She gave her to her husband to cut up, who set to work, and began by cutting the stitches that the Hare had sewn. All that was in the Antelope's interior at once came out; she jumped to her legs, and galloped away. She met the Hare and said to him : " All right ! I've found you out now !... Never again do I call you my friend ! "

* * *

The Hare being thirsty was looking for a pool but couldn't find one. At last he came across one where no one was on guard. The Tor-

toise was really in charge, but she was in the water. The Hare walked in : " What luck ! How nice and cool it is ! " said he, quenching his thirst, and swimming about. The Tortoise snapped at one of his legs, then at another... — " Hello ! let me go ! I'll promise you a goat if you will let go ! " They came out of the pool together, and the Hare said to her : " Come along to my house, and get your goat ". They reached his home, but no goat ! Nothing ! The Hare did not give her anything. Then he remembered the money, that he left in the burrow and said : " Let us go and see Mr. Chameleon. He has got my valuables, for he borrowed a lot of money from me. I'll just run round and fetch my brother ; he knows all about the business and will be my witness. " Having said this, he decamped. The Tortoise arrived at the Chameleon's abode and said : " Give me the Hare's money which you have got ! " — " What ? I haven't got anything belonging to the Hare ! " Whereupon the Chameleon blew into her eyes. She swelled, and swelled, and died.

That's the end.

2) The Hare and the Lion.

One day the Hare was looking into a pool and saw the sky reflected in the water. — " Hello ! " said he to himself, " there is a fine large country down there, where I can always hide if any one tries to do me any harm. I can go and be rude to the Elephants now with impunity ". Off he went to insult the Elephants, who promptly chased him. He rushed into the pool, but he was soon caught. — " Hi ! hi ! my grandfathers ! Let me go ! " (The Hare calls all the other animals " grandfather "). — " What shall we do to you ? Shall we kill you ? " — " What ! Kill me ? You will no longer have a grandson then... " — " Very well ! Then we will beat you ! " — " Why ? You can't find any spot on me big enough to hit, I am so small... " — " Well then ! we will just roll you in the mud, and smother you all over with it, inside and out ! " They did so, and left him lying on the ground, choked and smothered with mud.

* * *

The Hyena came along. She is very fond of flesh, but it must be dead flesh. She lets the other animals kill it for her. She picked up the Hare and thought she had found a choice morsel. — " But ",

said she, " this is too dirty ! it is all covered with mud ! I must wash it. " So she washed it. — " Now, the meat will be all wet and nasty; I must dry it ". So she laid it out, and sat down in the shade to wait. Suddenly the Hare jumped up and made off at full speed !

* * *

He came to Lord Lion's village and this Chief took him into his service. The Lion went hunting every day, and it was the Hare's duty to look after the Lion's children, and teach them their lessons. When the Lion returned from hunting, he stopped, some distance from the village and sent meat by the Hare for his three little children, saying to him : " Give the little ones the tender meat, for they are young, and you can eat the bones ! " The Hare told the children : " Your father says you are to eat the bones, for they are hard and will make you strong, and I will eat the meat. " Thus he regaled himself.

Then he taught them a nice little game. He collected a lot of wood, made a fire and said : " I will teach you how to jump. You know that your father catches animals by springing upon them, so you too had better learn how to spring properly ". He began first : " I will show you the way I jump, and you must do just as I do. " He easily cleared the fire in one bound, but, when the little Lion cub tried, he jumped right into the flames and was burnt. Then the Hare ate him up. When the Lion returned in the evening, he said to the Hare : " Show me my little ones ". He had stopped, as usual, a short way off, so the Hare lifted up one of the cubs saying : " Here is N° 1 ; " then another : " Here is N° 2 ; " and, lifting the same one twice : " Here is N° 3 ". — " T'is well ! " said the Lion. The next day the Hare repeated his game with the fire. Another cub perished, and was eaten. In the evening he lifted up the one cub that was left three times, and the Lion was quite satisfied. The day following the third cub was cooked and made away with. Then the Hare climbed into a thorny tree and scratched his skin so badly that he was bleeding in several places. The Lion came back towards nightfall : — " What is the matter with you ? " said he. — " Alas ! my grandfather, a whole band of enemies have been here ! They have killed all your children ! Just see the wounds their assagays have made all over my body ! " He had also taken care to make a quantity of marks on the ground : " You can see their footprints all around. I will go and find out which way they have gone, and we will pursue them ! "

* * *

The Hare ran off to the mountains, where he found an enormous boulder, so poised that it would only require the slightest push to send it crashing down the steep slope. — "This will do!" said he, "it is just exactly what I want!" He went back to the Lion and said to him : "Come along! and hide yourself just where I tell you to. If you hear a great noise, don't look up, don't even raise your head. It will be the enemy coming along, and, if you make any movement, they may see you, and run away. You can kill them when they pass close by you. Here is the spot! Hide yourself in here!" He placed him just below the rocking boulder. Then up he climbed. — "Look out! here they come!" He pushed the rock; down it fell, crushing the Lion. The "Slayer of flesh" (1) died! The Hare came hurriedly down the slope, cut off the Lion's claws and decamped.

* * *

He married the Grey Antelope, for he wanted her little horns to make a trumpet. The Hare is so full of cunning that he can induce any animal to marry him. After some time had elapsed, he said to her : "Let us play at cooking each other! (A hi psekane!) This is how we will do; we'll get a big cauldron, I'll get into it. You light a fire underneath. When the water begins to get warm, I will call out to you to take me out, and you will pull me out at once." No sooner said than done. The Antelope pulled the Hare out before the water was too hot. Then the Antelope got in, in her turn. The wily plotter put the cover on the cauldron, and plastered it down with dung (p. 37), filling every aperture, and saying : "You will be warmer if I do this". Then he sat down, and smoked his hemp-pipe. When the Antelope called out : "Come and help me! I am boiling!", he said : "Wait a minute, my pipe doesn't draw properly! I must pull at it a bit". She twisted about and cried for mercy. He put more wood on the fire, and, when the Antelope was thoroughly cooked, he eat the meat and kept the horns!

(1) Ñwangonyama, is the sirname of the Lion.

* * *

He went farther on, taking with him the jaw bone of the Lion he had killed, built an immense enclosure with stakes, and put the jaw-bone at the entrance. Then he sent this proclamation all through the land : " Come and see ! A new and wonderful thing ! Teeth growing out of the ground ! Quantities of them ! " He summoned everyone with his trumpet, and all the animals came into the enclosure, without noticing that there was no way out of it. He closed the entrance and all were prisoners. Then he said to them : " It is well, you are in the Chief's enclosure. I will go and tell him you have arrived. He will soon be here. " He went and decked himself out in a dress entirely covered with small pieces of looking-glass : it was so resplendent that it quite dazzled the eyes of all who looked at him. " Here is the King ", said they all, on seeing him approach. Then he addressed them and proclaimed this law : " Know ye all ! Hawks, Lions, Tigers, that from henceforth no beast of the field is allowed to kill any other one, or to eat his flesh. Nothing is to be eaten but grass ". He appointed a shepherd to see that the animals did not kill each other. The Lions and Tigers grew thin on this diet : it made them ill, and none but the herbivorous animals were in good health.

One day the Hare, having sent all the animals away, took off his glittering coat, and began to browse near the enclosure. Now it happened that a Lion, who was unwell, and could not go out with the others, had remained behind. He saw the Hare browsing close by, and, casting a glance around, to make sure no one was watching, with a single bound he was upon him and devoured him ! In the evening all the animals returned, but as the King did not put in an appearance for eight or ten days, their spirits began to revive. They plucked up courage and flew at each other's throats : a terrible carnage was the result; the stakes of the enclosure rotted and all the survivors dispersed. Amongst these was one of the Hare's brothers, who at once stepped into the shoes of the deceased deceiver and continued his evil ways.

One day the Hen invited the Hare to drink some beer at her house. There he saw the Hen cooking and the Cock roosting with his head

under his wing. "Where is his head?" he asked the Hen. — "Oh! he cut it off and sent it round to invite our friends to come. It is only his body that you see there: his head will soon come back." — "No! really! You don't say so? Honour bright?" — "Why certainly!" — "What sort of drugs do you use for this wonderful operation?" — "Oh! none at all! You just take a knife, sharpen it well, and cut your head off!" — "Ah! is that all? I must try it!"

Later on the Hare asked the Hen to drink beer with him. He cut off his head and killed himself. Henceforth the Hen was the most cunning of all the animals!

That is the end!

3) The Hare and the Baboon.

The Hare and the Baboon built a village together. One day, when they were tipsy, the Hare said to the Baboon: "Let us go and kill our wives!" The idea pleased the Baboon immensely: so they set off to kill them. The Hare went inside the hut and began to hit the big basket (ngula), telling his wife at the same time to shriek and cry out. The Baboon heard the cries, and was satisfied that the Hare was indeed killing his wife; so he took a big stick and belaboured his wife so that she died, whilst the Hare had not done his wife any harm, having only belaboured the big basket!

One day the Baboon overheard the Hare talking to his wife. He was greatly astonished. "Ha! ha!" he said, "the rascal has played a trick on me; I have killed my wife, and he never killed his!"

Another day the Hare proposed to the Baboon that they should go and steal ground-nuts in other folks' fields. The Baboon was quite agreeable, as he was suffering from hunger, having no wife to till his land, or to give him any good food. When they got to the fields they began helping themselves to the ground-nuts, dug them up, and eat them. Whilst they were thus employed the Hare said: "Grandfather, don't tire yourself digging up these ground-nuts; leave them alone; just sit down in the shade and I will dig them up for you". The Baboon was very pleased, and took a seat under a shady tree which was close by: then the Hare dug up ground-nuts, and threw

them down in front of the Baboon in such quantities that he was completely hidden behind the pile. He eat them greedily, and with great gusto. When the Hare saw that the pile was big enough, he went behind the Baboon and said : " Will you let me kill the fleas in your tail ? " — " Certainly, little one ! " said he. So the Hare set to work, pretending to be killing fleas, and all the while he was digging a deep hole, as deep as the tail was long, in which he wanted to fix it, when he would get opportunity ! He tried to put the tail in the hole, but, in doing so, hurt the Baboon who said : " You are hurting me grandson ! " — " No ", replied the Hare, " I'm not hurting you ; I am only playing with your tail ! " When the Hare saw that the Baboon had nearly finished his ground-nuts, he hurried off to fetch a fresh supply in order to divert the Baboon's attention, while he continued his digging operations. Once more he tried to insert the tail in the hole ; but the Baboon called out : " What are you doing, grandson ? " " I'm not doing anything, grandfather ! " said he, and continued digging until he had made the hole quite as deep as was necessary. Then he succeeded in putting the entire tail in the hole, right up to the stump : he filled in the earth all round it, and hammered it down with a stick as hard as he could. He tried to pull it out, but couldn't ; it was so securely fixed in. Seeing the Baboon had again nearly finished his ground-nuts, he got another lot, and went behind him to put the finishing touches to his handiwork.

When all was completed to his entire satisfaction, he ran off and clambered to the top of an ant-hill, and began to shout, at the top of his voice : " Hello ! Here's the Baboon eating up other folk's ground nuts ! " Hearing this the Baboon scolded the Hare, and told him not to make such a noise : " My grandson, you must not shout like that before I have finished my ground-nuts ! You can shout as much as you like when I have done, and we will then run away together ". But the Hare would not obey him, and went on shouting as loud as he could until, at last, the women of the fields heard him and people came running up with their bows and arrows and guns. Then the Hare came down from his ant-hill and took to his heels. As for the Baboon, he was in a great fright, dropped the ground-nuts, and tried to make off ; but he couldn't move, as his tail was hard and fast in the ground ! When he saw the folks approaching nearer and nearer, he made the most frantic efforts to get loose, throwing himself first on one side and then on the other, until finally, groaning with pain and terror, with one tremendous bound, he wrenched his tail free ;

but it was only the bone ! With a skeleton-tail waving and dripping blood (lwa ku dzu-dzu-dzu descript adv.) he rushed away. He jumped, and dodged, fearing lest an arrow or a bullet should hit him, until he got safely into the wood.

When he reached home he found the Hare seated in his wife's hut, but he made no remark. During the night the Hare went back to the spot where they had been eating ground-nuts, and unearthed the remains of the tail, which he took home to his wife telling her to cook it ; this she did with great care, beginning by rubbing off all the hairs ; she then stewed it with some ground-nuts. She also cooked some flour. When everything was done to a turn, she dished up the food on separate plates, one containing the flour, and the other the savoury stewed tail. Then the Hare sent his son to call the Baboon, who came with much pleasure, as he knew he was being asked to a meal. On his arrival he went into the hut, sat down and was served with the flour and its seasoning, the stew. He enjoyed the food, took some of the meat and ate it. — " Why ! " said he, " here is meat ! Wherever did you get it, my grandson ? " He had no idea it was his own tail ! He ate it, emptied the plate and went home.

Some days later, the Hare told his wife to make some beer, which she did ; when it was properly brewed, he invited all the countryside to come to a beer-drinking. They all came and drank beer. Grandfather Baboon was among the guests. While they were all enjoying themselves, the Hare raised his hand for silence, and requested permission to make a few remarks. When all the noise had subsided, he raised his voice, and asked : " Have any of you ever seen any one who devoured his own tail ? " They all said : " No, we have never seen such a person ! " The Baboon also declared he had never even heard of such a thing. — " Well ! " said the Hare, " shall I tell you who it is ? " — " Yes, do ! We should much like to know ", said they. Then the Hare exclaimed : " It is he, the Baboon ! he has eaten the tail, that he lost over there in the ground nut field ! " The Baboon was very angry, and left the gathering with a scowling face ; he went home muttering to himself : " I wonder how I can manage to get the better of that rascal ? I must try, for he is always making a fool of me, and annoys me horribly ".

* * *

After some weeks during which the Baboon had been cogitating how he coud be revenged on the Hare, he hit upon a plan. " I'll go

and get a wife" said he to himself, "and then I shall be able to trick him, and starve him to death!" So he began at once by making proposals to a girl in a distant village, and, when the time came to go and fetch her, he asked the Hare to accompany him on his journey. They each packed up their provisions and started. The Hare, when preparing for the trip, put his eatables in the bottom of his wallet, and three stones on top of them; then he closed the package. The Baboon, who wanted to deceive the Hare, and get him to throw away his provisions, packed one stone with the eatables in his bag. When they were well on their way, they came to the bank of a river where they sat down to rest, and, beginning to feel hungry, thought they might as well have something to eat. Then said the Baboon: "Let us throw our provisions into the water, to see them float down the stream, for we are quite close to the village of my future parents-in-law". Now this was not true: the village was still a long way off. The Hare was quite willing to throw away the food, so the Baboon began and threw his stone into the water; the Hare followed suit and also threw away a stone. Now, in the Baboon's bag only eatables were left, as he had only put one stone on the top, whilst the Hare, having put into his bag three stones, and having only thrown one away, had still two remaining.— "Go on, my friend", said the Hare, "throw away another stone!" The Baboon had no more to throw, so he had to throw away his flour. The Hare then threw in his second stone. Continuing the game the Baboon flung his "seasonings" into the river, and had nothing left to eat. The Hare tossed his third stone into the water, but had all his provisions untouched. So the Baboon, failing to trick the Hare, was himself a martyr to the pangs of hunger; for they were nowhere near the village of his relatives-in-law; they had still four nights to sleep on the way! They jogged along on their journey and, whenever they stopped for a meal, the Baboon would seat himself at some distance from the Hare, and watch him eating; he longed to share his provisions, but the Hare never offered him any, for the Baboon himself had stipulated that neither should ask the other for any of his eatables.

* * *

When they had trudged on for four days, they arrived at the village, where they were well received. In the meanwhile the Baboon had arranged that if, when swallowing the good things provided, he

should scald his throat, the Hare must run back and get the medicine for burns, to relieve the pain. Now this was only a dodge to get rid of the Hare, while he himself would eat up all the food, and the Hare find none on his return. However, the Hare suspected some trick and therefore stuck an arrow into the ground at the foot of the tree (muri) (1) which cures scalds and burns. Before reaching the village he said :" Oh! I have left one of my arrows over there ; I must run back and fetch it ". — " Don't you go digging up the roots of that tree that I shewed you ; you must only do that, if I happen to send you for some, when we are having our meal." So the Hare ran back to the spot, where he had left his arrow. — " He wants to trick me, does he ? " said he to himself, and he dug up a root and put it carefully into his bag, so that the Baboon should not see it. On his return the Baboon questioned him as to what had kept him so long : — " You didn't dig up any roots of that tree, did you ? " said he. — " Oh no !' replied the Hare. " I didn't take a single one !" And so they came to the village.

When food had been put before them, and they had commenced eating, the Baboon cried out : " I have burnt my throat ! Oh ! Oh !" Then the Hare hurried off, and got the remedy out of his bag : he had not very far to go. The Baboon was furious, and shouted : " I told you not to dig up the medicine, but only to do so if I should send you for it !" — " But, Grandfather, " replied the Hare, " I did not like to keep you waiting in pain such a long time ! " When the Baboon found he could not trick the Hare, he hurried up his wedding, and his return home, for he was very unhappy : he lost all his appetite owing to his fit of rage on seeing how short a time was needed for the Hare to fetch the medicine. On the other hand the Hare regaled himself heartily. The Baboon couldn't get over the disappointment ; he grew thinner and thinner and was nearly dying.

When they once more reached their home, they were each possessed of a wife, so they both started off to build their villages in different places.

*

The Hare used to go hunting to procure meat, but the Baboon was too lazy to hunt for himself, so lived by stealing meat from the Hare, and this is how he managed it : whenever the Hare had killed some

(1) Muri means both tree and remedy.

game and cooked it in the open, the Baboon smeared himself all over with mud, and came rushing out of the marshes towards the Hare's village. Then the Hare and his wife and the little ones all fled away, for they were afraid of this great black beast. Now it was only the Baboon who frightened the Hare : he took the game and gave it to his wife. Thus it went on for several days, until, at last, the Hare concluded that he must look carefully into the matter. So, on a certain occasion, when the Baboon carried on his thieving in the same way, the Hare remained hidden in his village ; only his wife and children ran away. He hid in the hut so as to watch closely the animal who stole his meat and see how he could fight him. The Baboon crept up to the pot in which the meat was cooking, for the folks of the village had not yet begun their breakfast. He lifted the cover, pulled out a piece of meat, and ate it up. Then the Hare let fly an arrow and shot him right in the stomach. The Baboon ran off and went home to his wife. He was very ill. A day or two later, the Hare went to see his grandfather, and, on arriving, greeted him with : " How do you do, Grandfather ? " Now, before entering the hut, the Hare had heard groans, but, as soon as he stepped inside, all was quiet, for the Baboon was afraid his visitor might suspect that it was he, who had been hit with the arrow. The Hare had, however, already recognised the Baboon as the culprit, and said to him : " Well, Grandfather, I hope you are feeling all right ? " — " No ", replied the Baboon, " I am not very well : I feel a pain in my side, which shoots right through me ". — " I knew it was you who stole my meat ", said the Hare, " so I shot you with an arrow ". So the Baboon died and his wife lived in want and misery. — That's the end !

* * *

Simeon Makwakwa, a Native of Bilen, gave me a different version of the way in which the Baboon worked his vengeance, or tried to do so, on the Hare for having made him eat his own tail.

The Baboon set to work picking up all the Hare's excrement for several days, until he had collected quite a large quantity. The Hare, noticing this manœuvre, said to himself : " All right ! We shall see ! " He caught a fowl and pulled off one of its legs without killing it : the fowl survived. The Baboon invited the Hare to dinner, and the latter went quite happily with the fowl's leg in his pocket. " Here is the plat du jour ", said the Baboon, pointing to the pot in which the Hare's excrement was cooking ". — " Thanks ! Thanks ! said the

Hare, who, as soon as his host's head was turned, dug a hole in the ground into which he emptied the contents of the pot, and began eating the hen's leg that he had brought with him. The Baboon returned. — "This chicken is very good" said the Hare, gnawing the bone. And so they parted.

A few days later, when the village was full of men playing *tshuba* (I. p. 314) the Baboon arrived on the scene, very cock-a-hoop, and called out: "Let me ask a question. Has any one here ever seen a person feasting on his own excrement?" — "Why certainly not" said every one present. — "Well I know some one who has so feasted! It is the Hare". — "Are you quite sure of that?" said the accused, and holding up in sight of all assembled, the one-legged fowl, which he had taken care to bring with him, he told the whole story. So the laugh was turned against the Baboon; every body made fun of him, and the villagers caught him by his blackened and twisted-up stump of a tail, and chopped it off! — That's the end!

4) The Hare's Hoe.

One day the Hare said to the Grey Antelope: "Let us go and sow peas". — "I don't like peas, I prefer wild beans" said the Antelope. So the Hare went by himself to sow peas. When they began to sprout, he noticed that they were disappearing, so he hid himself in the field, and caught the Antelope digging up his peas: "Aha!" said he, "you are a thief. Pay the fine!" She gave him a hoe, and he went off.

He met some women, who were digging clay with sticks. He said to them: "Haven't you got any hoes?" — "No", said they, "we haven't a single one". — "Then take this one", said he, "you can give it me back later on". When they had finished, the last one who used the hoe broke it. Then the Hare sang the following words:

Clay-diggers, give back my hoe, my friends,
My hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

The women took one of their pots, and gave it to him.

* * *

He left, and met some men who were harvesting honey; they were doing so in a piece of tree-bark. — "Haven't you got any pot to

put your honey into ?" said he. — " No " said the men, we haven't any". So he gave them his pot. The last one who handled it, broke it. When it was broken the Hare sang :

Honey-harvesters, give me back my pot.
My pot which the Clay-diggers gave me ;
The Clay-diggers paid for my hoe,
My hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

They took some of their honey, and gave it to him.

* * *

He came to a village, and there he saw women pounding maize flour. He said to them : " Haven't you any honey to mix with your flour ? " — " No ", said they, " we have none ". So he gave them his honey, saying : " Take it, but be careful to leave me some of it ". But the last one finished it all. Then he sang :

Pestle-pounders, give me back my honey,
The honey which the Honey-harvesters gave me ;
The Honey-harvesters paid for my pot,
The pot which the Clay-diggers gave me ;
The Clay-diggers paid for my hoe,
The hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

They took some of their dough, and gave it to him.

* * *

He went on, and met some boys herding goats. — " Haven't you anything to eat ? " said he, " your lips look very dry ". — " No " they replied, " we have no food at all ". So he gave them the dough, saying " Eat away ! but leave some for me ". The last one eat the last bite. Then sang the Hare :

Goat-herds, give me back my dough,
The dough which the Pestle-pounders gave me ;
The Pestle-pounders paid for my honey,
The honey which the Honey-harvesters gave me ;
The Honey-harvesters paid for my pot,

The pot which the Clay-diggers gave me;
The Clay-diggers paid for my hoe,
The hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

They took a goat, and gave it to him.

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* *

He met some young men tending the oxen while feeding. He said to them : "Your lips seem very dry ; haven't you anything to eat ?" — "No", said they, "we have nothing". So he said : "Take this goat, but be sure to leave some for me." The last one devoured the last mite. Then the Hare sang :

Cattle-men, give me back my goat
The goat which the Goat-herds gave me;
The Goat-herds paid for my dough,
My dough which the Pestle-pounders gave me;
The Pestle-pounders paid for my honey,
My honey which the Honey-harvesters gave me;
The Honey-harvesters paid for my pot,
My pot which the Clay-diggers gave me;
The Clay-diggers paid for my hoe,
The hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

They gave him an ox.

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* *

Still going on, he met some people who were tilling the fields. They were working for beer. — "Your lips look very dry", said he to them; "haven't you anything to eat ?" — "No !" said they. He gave them his ox saying : "You must leave a little of the meat for me". They went home with the ox, cooked it, and ate every mouthful ; nothing was left. Then the Hare came and sang :

Workers-for-beer, give back my ox,
My ox which the Cattle-men gave me ;
The Cattle-men paid for my goat.
My goat which the Goat-herds gave me;
The Goat-herds paid for my dough,
My dough which the Pestle-pounders gave me:
The Pestle-pounders paid for my honey,
My honey which the Honey-harvesters gave me;

The Honey-harvesters paid for my pot,
My pot which the Clay-diggers gave me;
The Clay-diggers paid for my hoe,
My hoe which the Antelope gave me,
The Antelope who paid the fine for my peas.

* * *

They seized him and beat him. When he was quite unconscious, they took him out of the village, thinking he was dead. But he regained his senses and climbed up a tree, which was in the middle of the village, just on the spot where they were all drinking beer; no one noticed him and, when he reached the top of the tree, he attracted in his direction all the light beer, and the water in the wells, in such a way that it all ran away into the ground, and folks soon found that there was nothing to drink. The little ones cried for water and there was none! The men and the women started out to fetch water, but they could not find any; the rivers even were all dried up! The little ones died, and so did both women and men! Just a few survived. These went to the Hare, and said to him: "My Lord, we ask for water, as we are dying of thirst." — "Pull up this reed, by the roots" said he. All the men, even the strongest, tried hard to pull up the reed, but could not succeed. — "Now", said the Hare, and with one finger he pulled it out of the ground, and forth flowed water and beer, light and strong. Then said he: "Give me five old women". He plunged them in the pond, and drowned them. After this they allotted to him a small province, where he reigned as chief.

* * *

The story of the Hare's Hoe is told from one end of the Thonga tribe to the other. I have another version, told me by a young man from Hutwene, near the confluence of the Levubye and the Limpopo, that is to say, at the North-Eastern boundary of the Transvaal (in the Maluleke clan). It is more or less identical with the Ronga version up to the moment where the Hare finds the women pounding maize; they give him a basketful of maize as compensation. He comes to a village where the fowls have nothing to feed on but beetles, and offers his basket of maize to the owners, who throw the entire contents of the basket on the ground, and it is all eaten by the chickens. In compensation the Hare receives some feathers, which they pluck

from the cocks and hens. He next comes across some young men dancing the " matangu " dance, and having no other ornaments than blades of grass twined in their hair. He gives them his feathers and, in return, they give him two assagais. The last meeting is with some men engaged in cutting up an elephant with large shells. The Hare gives them his assagais, and receives from them an elephant's tusk. The ending of the story is an adaptation — and to my mind a very inappropriate one — of an episode in the tale of the Year of the Famine, which is well known and often met with in the Ronga folklore. It concludes thus :

The Hare planted the elephant's tusk in his garden, and from it grew a beautiful fruit-bearing tree. There was a famine in the land. Then the Hare said to his wife and children : " I am going a long way off, to shoot eagles "; but he only went as far as his fruit tree, climbed up it and sang :

Tshoyo, tshoyo, mangayo !
I will be the chief mourner for my father.
I will be the chief mourner for my wife !

At the sound of this song, the fruit fell to the ground and he feasted on it. Returning home he would not eat the vegetables which his wife had prepared. " Give them to the children ", said he, " they are hungry ".

The next day he repeated the same performance; pretended to go shooting eagles, but went to his tree and sang :

Tshoyo, tshoyo mangayo !
I will be the chief mourner for my father,
I will be the chief mourner for my wife.

The fruit fell and he feasted on it.

One day his son followed him, without his being aware of it : he heard the singing and, when his father had gone, climbed up into the tree and sang the same words :

Tshoyo, tshoyo, mangayo !
I will be the chief mourner for my father,
I will be the chief mourner for my wife !

The fruit fell and he feasted on it; he also put a quantity of the fruit in his hair. When he got home he said to his mother : " Mother

fetch a basket, and take away in it all the lice which are biting me". She combed his hair, and fruit fell out of it. — "There" said he, "this is what father feasts upon, whilst we are dying of starvation. Come with me and I will show you where he finds it". She followed him and they sang the refrain :

Tshoyo, tshoyo, mangayo!
I will be the chief mourner for my father,
I will be the chief mourner for my wife !

The fruit fell in quantities until there was no more left on the tree. They feasted on it, but she filled a basket full of it and buried it in her hut. The husband went again to his tree to find fruit, but all was gone. Then he returned home, and was glad to partake of the vegetables prepared for him by his wife. — "It is odd" said she, "you seem quite hungry to-day".

When the famine was over, the Hare's wife brewed a quantity of beer, and said to her husland : "Invite all your relatives to a beer-drinking, and I will ask all those on my side of the family". When all were assembled round the jars, in the hut, she said : "Allow me to pass", and went to the back of the hut; there she unearthed the basket of fruit. Then she told all that the Hare had done during the famine. Her relatives, shocked and angry, took her away with them, together with her children, and she left her husband.

VI. *The Wisdom of the little ones.*

The following Thonga tales have already been published under this title :

The Man with the Big Sword (Ch. et C.(1), p. 144). *Piti* (Ch. et C., p. 151). *Mutipi* (Ch. et C., p. 158). *The Little Hated one* (Ch. et C., p. 170). *Sabulana, the friend of the gods* (Ch. et C., p. 266). *Sikulume* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 286). *Mutikatika* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 303).

I add to these the pretty story of *The Disobedient Child and the Big Snake*.

(1) Ch. et C. abbreviation for "Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga". Lausanne. Bridel.

The disobedient child and the big Snake.

A man had three children. The eldest and the second one started out for a walk in the forest. Their mother said to them : " If you see any of that large fruit, the sala, (2) you must not eat it, and if you come across any tracks of snakes you must not follow them ". When they got into the forest, the elder of the two saw a fine sala hanging on a tree ; he plucked it, and broke it open (to eat the pulp.) His younger brother said : " Take care ! Mother told us we were not to eat sala " ; but the elder beat him, and made him keep quiet. Soon they saw traces of a snake on the sand. The elder said : " I'm off ! I'm going to follow the tracks ! " — " No ", said his brother, " mother told us not to ! " but he only got another beating, and was forced to hold his tongue. The tracks led them to a spot, where they found a boa, which the elder killed ; he then lit a fire by rubbing together two pieces of wood, cooked part of the boa and ate it. The younger one refused to eat his share, so the other cooked some more and ate that too ; in fact he went on cooking and eating, until he had swallowed the entire snake. When it was time to go home he found he couldn't move ! Impossible to walk ! The younger brother had to almost carry him, and at length, with great trouble, they managed to reach home. But the poor boy was very ill!

Then the parents sent a messenger to call the Big Snake, the great physician who was called " Chicken's Wing ". The messenger went close to the hole, and sang as follows :

Tse, tse, tse, tse, Zi-nkinto-nkinto !
Do come and see the sick child, Tli-li-mamba.
His father has sent me to you, Tli-li-mamba,
He told me to seek for the doctor so clever,
The doctor so wise. Chicken's Wing, Tli-li-mamba.

The Snake slowly poked his head out of the hole and looked around, when the messenger was so terror-stricken that he dropped his weapons and fled. Others tried and failed in the same manner. At last the mother said : " I can't let my son die thus " ; so she went herself to the Snake's hole and sang :

Tse, tse, tse, tse, etc.

(2) The fruit with a hard shell, about the size of a large orange, which has often been mentioned. (See p. 16).

The great head came slowly out of the hole, and the two big eyes glared at her! In her fright she threw away her basket, and ran away. Then the youngest child, who was not yet weaned, said : " I can't bear to see my poor brother die like this ! " So he went off alone to the hole and sang in his baby tones :

Tse, tse, tse, tse, Qi-ito, ito !
Do tum and see sz, sick tild, Ti-li-mamba.
His fader has sent me to'oo, Ti-li-mamba.
He told me to seek for sz' doctor so 'tever,
Sz' doctor so wise, Ticken's Wing, Ti-li-mamba.

The Big Snake's head came slowly out of the hole, and looked straight at the child who never moved, but sang once more :

Tse, tse, tse, tse, etc.

He stood where he was, perfectly fearless ! Then the Big Snake said : " Very well ! Just wait while I go and fetch my little calabash of medicines, and my vapour bath apparatus ". He came completely out of his hole. The child did not say a word. — " Carry me " said the Snake. — " How 'tan I ? " I am not big 'nuff ! " — " Never mind, try and carry me all the same ". The child still objecting, the Snake wound himself all round him, so that only his legs and eyes could be seen ; in this way the child carried the Doctor to the village. — " Is it very far ? " asked the Snake. — " No, only a little way ". In due course they arrived ; birds, fowls, and folks, all fled at the sight of them ! The child entered the hut where his sick brother was lying, and the Snake unrolled himself. The patient was terribly swollen, for the sala which he had eaten had resumed its original shape, and the boa he had cooked had resuscitated inside him. Doctor Chicken's Wing administered his drugs, put up his mats round the boy, and gave him a vapour bath.

While the bath was in progress, the little child began to sing :

Titilo ! Mother told us, you know, Titilo,
Not to follow the tracks of the snake, Titilo.
Yet you started by picking the sala, you know,
And you swallowed it down just as fast as t'would go !

The Snake took up the words and sang in its turn ;

Tsungo, tsungo, ndlontiba !
Mother told you, ndlontiba,

After snakes not to go, ndlontiba,
Yet the sala you plucked, ndlontiba,
Broke the shell, the juice sucked, ndlontiba.

Then the boa, which was inside the boy, began to crawl out of his mouth. The sala came out first, as the boa pushed it in front of him, and continued pushing it with his head until he reached the very spot in the forest where the disobedient boy had eaten it; then the boa slid away to his own home.

* * *

The father then asked the Big Snake what reward he could give him for having cured his son. The doctor replied: " Give me an old iron ring which is of no more use to you. ". The father gave it. The Big Snake thanked him, and said to the youngest child: " Take me back again to my hole ". But the father offered to send some grown up men to accompany him. — " No ", said he, " I wish to be taken back by the little one ". So he again rolled himself round the child, and together they left the village as they had entered it.

Later on the little one came safely home.

VII. *The Ogre Tales.*

See the following ones already published:

Nyandzumula-ndengela (Ch. et C., p. 198). *Ñwamubya* (Ch. C., p. 203). *Ngumba-ngumba* (Ch. et C., p. 200). *Namashuke* (Ch. et C., p. 221). *Ñwahungukueri* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 311). *Mbukwana* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 313).

I now publish the tale of *Scaly-Heart* which I owe to a Lourenço Marques girl, Ñwanawatilo. Scaly Heart is the translation of Ñwambilutimhokora, lit. the one whose heart is covered with scales.

1) The Ogre Scaly-Heart.

Once upon a time the chief of Tembe sent his men to hunt wild beasts. Before they found any, they passed by the capital of another chief, where they saw a very beautiful maiden: she was so beautiful

that they gave up their hunting trip and returned at once to their chief to let him know what they had seen.— " Chief", said they, " there is no woman worthy to be your wife, but the girl we have seen ! " He said : "Where did you see her ? " — " She is the daughter of Mashomo", they replied. " Then ", said he, " go back as fast as you can, and ask her in marriage for me ". So back they went, and asked her in marriage. Her father said : " I am quite agreeable, if you can pay me a substantial sum of money ". He insisted upon a whole bag full of red money (gold pieces) as the price to be paid. They took the answer back to their chief Mabayi (2), who said : " What he has asked is a mere nothing ! " He gave the money and they returned to ask for the girl in marriage. Having arranged matters with Mashomo, they went to announce the fact to their chief, who said : " Make haste and take the lobola money, and bring the girl back to the conjugal home (thlomisa) ". So they started off to fetch her. On the day when she set out, her parents gave her a young girl of whom she was very fond, as a servant, to accompany her to her husband's home. They walked a long way. When still a good distance from their destination, they said to themselves : " We must send some people on in front of us, to let Mabayi know that his wife will make her entry into the village to day, so that he can send folks to meet her. " So those who were accompanying them went on ahead, and the girl and her servant remained behind alone.

* *
* *

The two maidens walked along, and came to a spot where there was a fig-tree. Suddenly a very ripe fig fell down right in front of them. Now that fig had been thrown there by an ogre (Shitukulumukhumba). The servant girl picked it up, saying : " What a treat ! " They walked on for some distance, when the servant cried out : " I have a pain in my stomach ". After this she walked a little farther, and then fell to the ground, and died. They were still a long way from the village, and those who were to have met them had not yet arrived. The daughter of Mashomo found herself in a terrible

(1) Mashomo was the chief of a small territory called Nkasana, to the South West of the Bay of Lourenço Marques ; Tembeland, on the other hand is due South and is a far larger country.

(2) Chief of the Tembe, deported in 1890 (?) by the Portuguese.

plight, as she had to continue her journey all alone and did not know the way. She began to cry, saying: " Oh ! my sister, I must travel all alone ! With whom shall I travel ? " After having thus wept, she buried her companion wrapping her in the clothes she had been wearing and in the pieces of cloth that she carried in her basket.

When the ogre heard these cries he came down from the tree, and approached the maiden saying : " What has happened to make you weep so bitterly ?" She replied : " I have had a great misfortune : my sister who was accompanying me is dead ! " The ogre sympathised with her, and said (speaking through his nose) : " Ho ! my young friend, you are indeed the victim of great misfortune ! " The maiden recommenced crying : " Oh ! my mother ! Oh ! my sister ". She again began to weep, and the ogre mimicked her adding : " Now you have wept long enough ! Let us be off. " She said : " Leave me alone to bewail my misfortune. With whom shall I continue my journey ? " He said : " Let me carry your basket " and took it on his shoulders. The two walked for some little distance, when the ogre turned round and saw the maiden in tears. She cried : " Oh ! my mother ! Oh ! my sister "! The ogre mimicked her : " Oh ! my mother ! Oh ! my sister ! " And said : " Forwards ! Let us go on ! Do you think you can bring her to life again by weeping ? " — " That shows me," replied she, " that it is you who killed my sister, for every time I mourn for her, you try to hinder me ". He said : " Do you take me for one who casts spells ? I met you all in tears, but the girl who is dead I have never seen ".

On they went again and came to a pond. " Let us bathe in this pond " said the ogre. She replied : " I cannot bathe here, for this is where my mother died ; she is buried in this very spot. " That was how she got out of bathing there. They went on a little farther, and came to another pond. — " Here is a nice place to bathe " said the ogre. — " No ", said the girl, " this is where my father died, I cannot." They continued their journey. They passed several ponds. The girl had some excuse at each of them : here it was her grandmother who died, there her maternal aunt, at another place her maternal uncle, her brother and so on. When they reached the last pond which was quite close to the village to which they were travelling, that of Mabayi, the ogre said : " No more of your deception now ! In this pond we will bathe ! " She tried to excuse herself by citing various relatives who had died on the spot : " You are telling lies ! " said he, " do you want to make me believe that every one of your

relatives are dead and that you are an orphan" ? She replied :" That is just how it is ! Well ! let us bathe !" The Ogre said : " Let us leave our clothes here, and jump in : we will see who can get out on the other side first". He pointed to a spot a good long way off. They jumped into the water with a " booo ! ", but the maiden quite forgot she was racing, so did not swim fast, and got to the other side a long time after the ogre had reached it. He ran round the edge of the pond, as fast as he could, and dressed himself in the girl's clothes. When she got back she found he had taken all her clothes, and the only thing remaining was his belt of skins, lying on the ground. She said to him : " Please give me back my clothes ! " But he only spat on her and said : " Why ? you are not dry yet ! " She waited a moment, and then asked for her clothes, when the ogre once more spat upon her saying : " Look here ! you are still wet ! " When she asked him a third time for her clothes, he said : " Can't you do me a good turn, and wear that belt of skins for a little while ? you might as well see what it feels like to be bitten by lice " (Ogres are said to be infested with lice). — " Alas ! " said she, " now you have stolen my clothes ! What a terrible misfortune for me ! " He said : " I will give them back to you when we get a little farther on". They continued their journey. — " Do give me back my clothes " implored the maiden, " we are getting close to the village ". — " Ha ! Ha ! " said he, " Come along : put your best foot foremost ! " He never gave her back her clothes, and in this guise they entered the capital.

* * *

The women came out to meet them with shouts of welcome. When they saw the ogre, they cried : " Welcome, daughter of Mashomo ! " Thus they received the ogre who had assumed a human shape, and even carried the reed of the chiefs. They were shewn into a hut. The ogre dressed-up said : " Don't let that individual come into the hut; she is not a person accustomed to live under cover; let her stay in the open ". The women replied : " Isn't she your servant ? You brought her with you ". The next morning, when seated chatting on the square, folks began to consider the situation, and the chief's wives said : " When the people went out hunting, they came back saying, they had found a woman prettier than we are; can it possibly be that person over there ? " pointing to the ogre. During the day, the clothes' thief said : "Tell the ogre (mean-

ing Mashomo's daughter) to go and scare the birds in the fields with the other children ". When the reached the gardens they children cried out : " Pso ! Pso ! (1) The birds, Scaly-Heart, here they are ! " The maiden, when she frightened away the birds, sang softly :

Tho ! Tho ! Nansibo !
Never before have I scared away birds !
I used to bathe in the morning,
I used to bathe in milk ! Nansibo ! (2)

The children listened, and the birds flew away. On the following days, when the girls went out to watch the crops, Mabayi's young niece listened very attentively when Mashomo's daughter sang. She said to her companions : " Let us all go and bathe together, for it is our custom to bathe at noon when the birds are hiding in the trees ". Mashomo's daughter dissented thus : " I-nhi-i-nhi " (No !) for she never opened her mouth to speak properly. Her teeth were all red, but she would not show them, for they were just like pieces of ivory, and were a token of her royalty, the finishing touch to her beauty. When the other girls went to bathe she remained behind, but when they were back from their bath, she went into the water; also she never ate with the rest of the folks, when dressed in her skins : she ate always by herself. When she came out of the water, she stayed on the bank, and dressed herself in other clothes, which she got by the power of her magic ring. She began to dance. Then all her female relatives and her servants who died, appeared and danced and mourned with her, until she sent them all away again. Also, by the help of her ring, she made to appear all the food she required, for she ate nothing in the village. There they served her meals in a horrid broken dish, which they made very hot, so that she should burn her fingers when she touched it. These were the orders given by the creature who had arrived with her. As for her, she just threw the dish on one side when no one was looking at her. When she had eaten all she wanted, she said : " Let everything disappear ! " Then she returned to the fields.

(1) Pso ! the shout by which they frigthten away the birds from the fields of sorghum. This occupation is called psaya (p. 25).

(2) This song is partly in Zulu and has never been properly explained. It would seem that the maiden is discreetly letting her companions know how gently she has been brought up. *Nansibo* is probably an interjection without meaning, such as are often met with in these short songs.

A few days later they all went to scare the birds. The girls shouted :

Pso ! Pso ! Pso ! the birds, Scaly-Heart, there they are !

The maiden once more sang her sweet little song :

Tho ! Tho ! Nansibo !
Never before have I scared away birds ;
I used to bathe in milk ! Nansibo.

Now Mabayi's little niece had hidden, and listened to the song : she went to her friends and said : " One would really think a human being was singing. It is a wonderful song. She doesn't sing through her nose. " The others said : " You can't have heard very well : she is an ogress ".

At noon they said : " Let us go and bathe ", and they called Mashomo's daughter who replied : " Inhi " — " No " ; so they went off without her. The chief's little niece said to herself : " I will hide and spy on her ". She did not go with the others, but followed the maiden when she went to bathe. When the royal girl had finished bathing, she again put on beautiful clothes, sang and danced, and her female relatives came and danced and wept with her. The little girl, hidden in the grass, felt her heart thumping against her ribs, and wanted to show herself, but did not dare, for fear the dances might stop and something else happen. As soon as all the people had finished dancing and had disappeared, she came out of her hiding place, ran to Mashomo's daughter, clasped her in her arms, weeping and saying : " Aha ! it is indeed you, my mother's sister ! (1) My heart told me you were not an ogress ! Why do you suffer tortures in these horrid skins, when you are a chief's daughter ? " The maiden replied : " Let me go ! Do not hold me, for I am Scaly-Heart ! " And she added : " Don't tell anyone what you have seen. " The girl replied : " I will say nothing to the people, I will only tell my uncle, Mabayi. " — " You must not say anything, even to him ; if you do, you will see nothing more ! " — " Very well ", said she, " I will not tell anyone ". They went home and the next day once more returned to the fields to scare the birds. When it was time to bathe the little girl said to her companions : " I am not going with the rest of you, I am going with the ogress. " Everything happened just as before ;

(1) The families of Tembe and Nkasana are probably related.

the maiden sang, and danced : she ordered food, and the two sat down and ate their meal together, but, although they talked a great deal, and the little girl asked : " Why is it that you wear these horrid skins ? " Mashomo's daughter would not tell her anything of all that had happened on the road.

* * *

Now the ogre who had stolen the clothes, annoyed the village folks by stealing their eggs. He unrolled his long tail, and went about at night picking up the eggs, and stealing all the food which had been left in the pots. People said : " Who is it that takes our eggs ? It must be somebody, as we have no dog to eat them ". The ogre also chimed in, and said : " Yes, even in my hut any food left over always disappears ! " In this way he deceived them.

One day the folks said : " We must just set a trap and see if it really is rats who do the damage ". During the night the ogre unrolled his tail (to steal eggs), and it was caught in the trap ! He coiled it up again as well as he could, but could not force the trap open, so had to hide it, trap and all, under his clothes. All night long he was groaning : — " Oh ! my stomach ! my stomach ! " he cried, " I never had such a stomach ! How miserable I am ! " Ah ! my ancestors of Tembe ! " — " Whatever is the matter with you ? " said the folks, and they dosed him with dysentery medicine, which, he said, had no effect at all. It really was the rat-trap pinching his tail, which troubled him so.

The villagers went to the spot where they had set the trap and found it had gone ! " Why ! " said they, " what kind of a rat can it possibly be which walks off with the trap after it is caught ? "

The ogre could not rest, night or day, so he was very irritable, and stormed at the maiden whom all knew as Scaly-Heart, and told her to be off. " Go and scare the birds ; they are eating all our millet, " said he. Mashomo's daughter merely replied : " Very well, I will go. "

Meanwhile the little girl, Mabayi's niece, could not hold her tongue any longer ; so she told her uncle that the supposed ogress was really a woman. Mabayi said to her : " You are telling lies ; what shall I do to you if it is not a woman ? " — " You can beat me as much as you like ", said she, " I don't mind, for I am quite sure that it is a woman. You have only to go and hide yourself, and you will see. "

The girl told him at what time the maiden went to bathe, and so he took his gun and stretched himself in the grass on the slope of the lake. Mashomo's daughter went at noon, but she saw footprints, and recognised them as being those of Mabayi, so she did not let herself be seen, and returned home without bathing. Later on she talked with the little girl and said : " Haven't you told something to Mabayi ? " — " No ", said she, " I have not told him anything ". — " Yes, I am sure you have ", returned Mashomo's daughter, " for I recognised his footprints ". Then the girl felt quite ashamed. When Mabayi returned he was very angry with his niece, but she said : " I have done nothing wrong, Uncle, go and hide again to-morrow. "

The next night, the rat trap which had been working its way through the ogre's tail, fell off together with the tip of the tail. He fell down over it, shouting : " Yo, Mamana ! Oh ! my mother ! " He sat on top of it to hide it, but the chief had seen what had happened ; although he made no remark, he did not altogether appreciate his new wife, and had discovered that she had coarse hair like an ogre. The ogre said : " My stomach feels a little better now. "

On the following day Mabayi again went out to spy. Now, although the maiden had seen footprints, she couldn't help being seen, as the lice annoyed her so, that she was just obliged to go into the water and bathe. On coming out she put on clothes still more beautiful than any she had previously worn. Mabayi's heart bounded in his breast. He said to his niece : " Is she coming this way ? " — " Keep quiet", said she, " and you will see something else". Mashomo's daughter began to dance, and to laugh heartily, showing her red teeth. Mabayi said to his niece : " Let me go now, I must catch her and prevent her putting on those skins again. " — " Wait a bit ", said the niece. Mashomo's daughter then ordered food to appear, and sat down comfortably at table. Mabayi asked : " Isn't this the right time for me to show myself ? " — " Go quickly ", said his niece : " If you don't go at once she will make the food disappear, and put on her old skins again ! " The chief ran fast, reached the maiden, caught her by the hand, and said : " Good day, daughter of Mashomo ! " The girl began to cry and said : " I am not Mashomo's daughter : I am Scaly-Heart ; Mashomo's daughter is at the village". — " No ", said Mabayi, " you are Mashomo's daughter, why do you hide your real self ? Don't wear those awful skins any more ! My servants indeed told me the truth, when they said that

the only woman worthy to be my wife was Mashomo's daughter. Let me complete the lobolo by killing this savage." (He meant the ogre). The maiden was silent, and the chief continued : "Tell me how I must set about it ?" She replied : "I cannot tell you to-day". They sat down and finished the meal, after which she made the remains disappear, and rubbed herself all over with mud, thus concealing her beauty. — "That's all wrong", said Mabayi, "you must throw away those skins to day". — "I cannot throw them away", she replied, "for if the ogre should see me in good clothes he would kill me". The chief said : "I will go back to the village and kill him this very day." — "If you try to kill him, and don't act with the greatest prudence", replied the maiden, "some great misfortune will happen to you". — "All right", said he, and they went back to the village by different ways.

When they got home, Mabayi and his little niece asked the ogre : "Won't you make a little dress for the girl who came with you, so that she can leave off those skins ?" — "Do you suppose", he replied, "that ogres like to wear proper clothes ?" — "But, she is a real human being, as she came with you ; any way won't you make her just a very small petticoat ?" — "Well", said the ogre, "you can make her a dress if you like ; I am not going to do it". So they made a scanty little dress for her.

The next day they said to the ogre : "Queen, you might perhaps go out and look for some wood and see something of your country." — "A good idea" said the ogre, "I have not been anywhere since the day I first came here. Come along, Scaly-Heart !" But they said "No, let her stay at home, and rest for a while ; she is in need of it." Then the ogre said to the maiden : "Ah ! to-day you can play queen! You can remain at home". The ogre started out with the others. He tore up the trunk of a tree with his tail, put it on his head and returned. While he was away, they dug a deep hole in the village, boiled some grease, made from nkuhlu (mafureira, p. 18) and placed it, all hot, in the hole. They also warmed some water and put it in the royal hut, where the chief washed and dressed. Over the hole, so as to hide it, a nice new piece of matting was stretched, in front of which they put a dish of cooked maize, with a delicious sauce of makanye nuts poured over it Now, all these days, the chief was not eating properly because he was unhappy. When the villagers saw the ogre returning, they welcomed him saying: "Good day, daugther of Mashomo", adding : "To-day the Queen herself has gone out and

brought back a whole tree-trunk!" They nodded and made signs to one another, saying: "One can easily see that this is not a human being!" The ogre threw his immense log of wood down on the square, and every one urged him to go into the royal hut, saying: "Go, and have a refreshing wash; you have perspired a good deal to-day!" — "Ho!" said the ogre, "you are kind to have even warmed some water to refresh me after fetching wood." They replied: "Are not you our Queen? Don't you know that we all count as nothing in the eyes of the chief; you are the only one for whom he really cares." Then the ogre burst out laughing: the idea tickled his fancy! The women said." Let us wipe you down". But he quickly replied: "Oh! I can very well do that for myself". (He was afraid they would see his tail). The sisters-in-law insisted, but the ogre refused. They then left the hut, and he washed himself. As soon as he had finished, the women called him to come out, and made him sit down upon the spot where they had stretched the matting, saying: "Come Queen, and moisten your mouth a little before the evening meal" (by eating the maize they had cooked for him). The ogre replied: "Goodness! how very fond of me you all seem to be!" Now Mabayi's niece was watching with a twinkle in her eye, for she knew what had been prepared for the ogre, who stepped forward to take a seat, but no sooner had he seated himself than down he went into the hole, matting and all! The dish of maize was the only thing left on the edge of the hole! The boiling grease tortured the ogre, making him scream and yell: "You might as well", he cried, speaking through his nose, "have let me finish that savoury sauce before killing me! Oh! these fowls! Oh! these eggs! It was I who picked them all up with my tail!" Thus he made a full confession while boiling in the seething grease. "Ah! I ate my fill of them!"

When he was nearly dead, one of his eyes popped out and fell on a rubbish-heap, where folks threw the cinders. There it took root, and grew into a kind of gourd very much like the ordinary gourds. As for the maiden, she became the chief's wife, and told him all that happened on the road. The chief was now very happy, and killed lots of oxen which they brought as presents to his wife.

* * *

This woman lived a long time in the village and had a little son. At the moment her son was born the gourd-plant produced a gourd.

She saw this fruit and said to herself : " Why ! there is a gourd on the rubbish-heap ! " and the gourd replied : " There is a gourd on the rubbish-heap ! " She said : " It is talking to me ! " — " It is talking to me" mimicked the gourd ! — " I will go and pick it", said the chief's wife. The gourd answered : " Take care, I will pick you too ! " So she left it on the plant. and did not pluck it. However, a few days later, she was tired of seeing the gourd still hanging on the plant, so she pulled it off and took it home. She peeled the fruit and put it into the pot to cook. She laid her little son on the ground close to the fire, while she went out for a few moments on an errand. While she was away that gourd got out of the pot, rolled over and over, caught hold of the child, put it into the pot on the fire, and then went off and fixed itself again on the plant. On her return, the mother looked round and said : " Where can my boy be ? " She hunted everywhere and asked everybody, but no one could tell her anything about him. Distracted, she wept, and went about her work ; she lifted the cover of the pot to see if the gourd were cooked and exclaimed : " Why ! This looks like meat ! Could it possibly be my child ? I most certainly only put a gourd in the pot ! " Se lifted the utensil off the fire, and, emptying it, found that it really did contain her child, completely boiled ! She wept and screamed aloud in her distress. The villagers came to enquire what was the matter. Astonished at what they heard and saw, they said : " Whatever possessed you not to leave that gourd alone when you had already heard it speaking to you ? " She said : " I didn't know anything about it ! " They went into mourning for the child for the usual time. When the mourning was over, she had another child : precisely the same thing occurred again. Then the chief said : " We must move from this place, and leave this gourd or it will kill all your children ". They moved and built another village. She had several other children. Misfortune no longer pursued them.

VIII. *Moral Tales.*

The following have been already published :

The Girl and the Whale (Ch. et C., p. 277); *The Road to Heaven* (Ch. et C., p. 237); *Nabandji, the Toads'Girl* (Ch. et C., p. 264); *Halandi and Mayiwane* (Ch. et C., p. 242) ; *Titishane's cat* (Ch. et C., p. 253); *The lazy woman* (Ch. et C., p. 257); *Charity rewarded*

(Ch. et C., p. 270); *Longoloka* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 327); *The Bounder-of-the-plain* (Les Ba-Ronga, p. 353), a totemic tale, similar to Titi-shanes'cat.

I reproduce here the tale of *Zili*, which was first published in the Report of the S. A. A. A. S. for 1904, Vol. III, p. 250. It is one of the most striking of all and its graphic description of the torments of conscience is wonderful. The song illustrating it, in two parts, is also very curious and will be again mentioned. (See tune 34, later on.)

Zili.

A man named Zili married a woman. One day he said to her: "It is a long time since we went to visit thy parents. Prepare a pot of beer and let us go." She put the pot on her head and set out. He led her by a path which was new to her, a road which no one used. — "Why dost thou lead me here?" she said. — "Never mind, it is another way," answered he. They came to a tree and rested beneath it. The woman objected: — "There is no room to sit down". – "Just sit down and set down thy pot of beer, that I may drink" said he. She gave it to him. He drank. Then he caught hold of her and killed her. He cut off her head, her arms, her legs, everything that had human shape. Those limbs he wrapped in a truss of grass, and went and hung them up at the top of the tree. As for the remainder of the body, he skinned it, cut the flesh into strips, which he also wrapped up in grass, and took them with him on his way.

Soon a bird began to sing:

Zili! Amasesendini, amasendi baba! — Siloyile, sesendini!
I nyama mune yakunhati! Sesendin!
I kala nkila ka lihondjo! Sesendin!
Zili! Amasesendini, amasendi, old man! — You are a witch, sesendini!
What's that kind of meat? Sesendin!
It has got no tail! it has no horn! Sesendin!

— "What bird is this that sings and calls me by name?" said he. He threw his stick at the bird and killed it. Then he lifted his burden, and went on his way. But the bird rose again; it followed him, passed close to him, flapping its wings, *pfu... pfu...*, perched on another tree, and sang its song once more. Zili astonished, exclaimed: "How is it the bird follows me thus? Is it possible that I did not kill it outright?" He gave chase to it, knocked it down, tore it limb

from limb and threw the mangled remains to the winds. Once more he picked up his load, and continued his journey.

But behold the bird gathered together its scattered limbs, and came back to life. Zili again pursued it a long way, and again killed it. Then he laid the dead bird on the wood and watched it slowly burn to ashes. He then ground the ashes to powder, and scattered it far and wide. He remained sitting a long time at this place. As the bird did not return, he said to himself: "This time it is quite dead". He then resumed his journey and duly arrived with his load at the village of his parents-in-law.

They hastened to meet him: — "Here is Zili. Good-day, Zili!" They took from his hands the truss of grass filled with flesh; they bade him enter the hut, and, before untying the bundle, they asked for news of his home. Then his mother-in-law took up the bundle: — "To-day" said she, "thou dost treat us as princes!" And she began to open it. But, lo! swiftly and silently the bird arrived, and, perching on the top of the hut in which they were sitting, it began its song:

> Zili! Amasesendini, amasendi, old man! — You are a witch, sesendini!
> What's that kind of meat? Sesendin!
> It has got no tail! it has no horn! Sesendin!

Zili kept quiet. "What a curious bird's song that is!" said his parents-in-law. Others said, however: "Oh, it is only a bird." And the bird sang on.

"How did you leave our daughter at home?" inquired the parents. — "Quite well" answered he. "She will soon come herself." But the bird continued its song: "Zili, etc."

At last the bird flew into the hut. They drove it out, but it would not keep silent. The people began to understand what it said. Zili trembled, but said not a word. The bird then went to sing in the ears of the mother, as she began to roast the flesh Zili had brought. She understood and fell fainting.

Then the men of the village turned to Zili: — "What does this mean? What bird is this that follows thee and calls thee by name?" But Zili declared: "The bird came not with me. I heard it here for the first time in your hut." — "If that is so, come and let us see our child," said they.

They set off, the bird flying before them, and they following its guidance. It led them to the big tree in the bush, and began to sing loudly close to the truss of grass which Zili had hung up. Some one

climbed up the tree, and untied the bundle. They opened it, and, at once, the men recognized the girl's face and the bracelets she wore on her wrists and ankles. They seized Zili and bound him. Some of them went on to summon Zili's relations all into one hut. When the others arrived they threw Zili, still bound, into the hut and then set fire to it.

So died Zili and his relations.

IX. *Tales founded on real facts.*

This is a new category which I have not mentioned in previous publications, but which is, I think, well defined. In it I would include the well-known and wide-spread theme of the *Year of famine* (See 260) and the two following curious stories: "*The Child that was carried off by the Baboon*" (a fact which might very well have happened), and "*Those who laugh but once.*" The latter is an example of ironic popular folklore, a branch of literature which is met with in many countries, and consists in making fun of people of a certain village or region. In Switzerland the village of which one makes fun and tells stories is never wanting! *Those who only laugh once* are said to dwell near Inyaka Island, in the Maputju Country. But the story-teller, to whom I owe this amusing tale, Jeremia Lomben, asserted that they are an imaginary clan. However, the words *Makwetjhu*, *tjhwala*, quoted as pronounced by them, are a deformation of makweshju and shjwala, their ordinary form in the Maputju dialect, and it is said, that, in a certain spot of Inyaka Island, this altered pronunciation is really met with. So this tale has been probably applied to those Inyaka people, although it originally concerned another clan now forgotten. Natives take an immense delight in making fun of what they esteem an erroneous pronunciation, each clan laughing at the other's for peculiarities of dialect.

The child that was carried off by a baboon.

A man started out with all his belongings and went to marry a wife in a foreign country. The woman lived with him for a long time, and had a daughter. One morning she went out to work in the fields, but could find no one to carry her baby. When she got to the field,

she hoed a large plot of ground; she laid her baby on the ground, and put it to sleep. A baboon arrived on the scene, and began to play with the child without anyone seeing it. Soon after the mother saw what was going on, but said nothing, for she knew that, if she made a noise, the baboon might kill the little one. But the baboon presently picked up the child and climbed up into a high tree. The woman said: "You can play with him, if you like, but be gentle and don't hurt him". The baboon replied: "If you make any noise, and if you call the folks to help you, I can easily crush him against the tree." So she kept quiet, and the baboon jumped from tree to tree. When she lost sight of it, she did not say anything, but went on hoeing, and soon the baboon managed to slip away unobserved. When she finally lifted her head, and looked around, she could not see the baboon anywhere, neither could she find her child. She looked intently at the tops of all the trees, without seeing anything. Then she threw down her hoe, and went to search for the baby. She walked a long way and shouted loudly, but with no result. She climbed to the top of a hill, for, she said: "As the baboon went by the tops of the trees perhaps he will hear me better if I get on a high place too." There she sang a song, which was both an appeal and a lament for her little one. (See tune 35, later on.)

Baboon! Ravisher! What have you done with my child? Tell me!
My heart is anxious,
I must go, I must go home quickly to my master! Alas! (1)

Not knowing in which direction to continue the pursuit, she went to enquire at a village. She said: "Have you, by any chance, seen a baboon, which had a child with it?" — "Yes", they replied, "one has just passed by: there are its footprints still in the sand, and the hole it made to hold the little one's calabash". She started on again, in all haste, walked a long way, following the marks as much as possible, but she could not find the pair, for the baboons are curious animals, and when they are tired, they spring from one tree-top to another. The woman searched in many places and went everywhere singing her lament and weeping. She sang:

Baboon! Ravisher! What have you done with my child? Tell me!
My heart is anxious.
I must go, I must go home quickly to my master! Alas!

(1) The words of this song are half Zulu.

Then she turned homeward. Night was coming on. Before reaching her home, she cut down the trunk of a tree, which was about the size round of a child. She cut it so that it was rather fatter in the middle, and thinner at the two ends: then she put this in the skin which she had used for carrying her baby, and, feeling very sad, went back to her village. She took care to cover the piece of wood with a cloth so that folks could not, at once, see what she was carrying. She went into the yard of her mother-in-law's house, who said to her: "What does this mean? How is it that you are coming back so late at night?" — "It isn't my fault", said she, "it is the child's: she is feverish." — "Well! if she is feverish, that is just why you ought to have come home earlier!" — "No, I wanted to hoe a small patch and sow my maize, but even now, I have not been able to hoe a piece worth mentioning, and have brought my seeds back with me." The mother-in-law was silent; but shortly afterwards she said: "Put the child down, so that I can have a look at her; you are not going to sleep with her on your back to-night, are you?" — "I will put her down when she wakes up," said she, and the mother-in-law said nothing more.

When the husband came home, he asked his wife similar questions. He said: "Put the child down on the ground so that I can see her; it won't hurt her, even if she is not very well." The wife went about from spot to spot, doing her work, and hoping thus to distract her husband's attention, and prevent him asking her any awkward questions; at last she went into her hut to go to bed. Her husband said to her: "Didn't I tell you to lay the child on the ground, so that I might have a look at her? If she is ill, never mind; she will die in my arms, I who am her father!" In spite of his insisting, the woman would not obey him. Then the man became very angry; he took his assagai and slit open the skin in which the baby was carried, when out fell the log of wood! — "Is this what you were hiding?" cried he. "Is this my child?" Irritated to a degree, he went out and called his relations to come and see what had taken place in the hut and to look at the block of wood. He wanted to kill his wife, but the relations said: "Don't kill her; we will begin by examining her, and trying to find out how all this has happened, how it is that her child is changed into a log of wood?" The poor woman, all faint and trembling said: "I fear it is all up with me to-day!" Then she told them just what had occurred saying: "It was while I was hoeing: and you know that I had no one to take care of the baby". Her relations

replied: "It is quite clear to us that you have killed your baby; she was not carried off by any baboon. If a baboon had done this, why didn't you rush home and tell us about it? We would have aroused all the men in the village, and they would have followed it until they caught it".

They turned the woman out of the village: perhaps they killed her, I am not quite sure.

Those who only laugh once (Ba ka Mahlekakañwe).

These folks lived in a country by the sea, a country that was quite cut off from all other countries by an immense marsh of papyrus. They were all able to go across this quagmire, for they knew just where to plant their feet. (No one ever went to see them, for those who were not accustomed to jump from one clod of earth to another were apt to fall into the slimy mud). They were called "Those who only laugh once", for when they burst out laughing, they only got as far as "Ha!"; they could not go on: "Ha! ha! ha! ha!" That was their infirmity. — Now their chief never had any occasion to assemble the army for warlike expeditions, because his people were entirely separated from all the rest of the world. However, some of his folks, having gone to visit a neighbouring country, heard that the army had gone out to battle, and saw the warriors dancing and celebrating their doughty deeds before the chief. On their return home, they said to their own chief: "Call our army together too and let us go out to fight wild boars!" So they started out for the big forest, where the wild boars are to be found, and roused them up about noon; one man ran his assagai through a boar and cried out: "Tjhokota makwetjhu, ndi tlhabile sha ku tjhwala nkumbu ndi nomu!" — "Ho! my brother, extol my prowess! I have slain a beast which carries his nose on top of his mouth!" The other replied: "Ho! it is a wild boar." They returned home, and their chief entertained them quite royally, bacause they had shewn themselves so valiant in the fight.

On another occasion they heard far off in the distance a noise: "Huuum!" They cried: "Chief, call the army together! To arms, every one of you!" They all went to get their assagais. Again they heard a quail, "Huuum!" — "It is over there!" they said, and proceeded very slowly and cautiously in the direction of the sound. Once more they heard: "Huuum!" — "It is some huge

wild beast", they cried : "Let us be after it!". So they all began to stamp on the ground together : "Rji, rji, rji", and holding the assagai in one hand and the shield in the other they formed a circle round the enemy and gradually closed in on him. Suddenly: "Whirrr!!"(1) and up got a quail! The whole army were so startled that they fell over backwards! When they recovered from the shock, they all went home, feeling very much ashamed of themselves.

X. *Foreign Tales.*

Under this title I have already published in "Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga": *Bonawasi* (p. 291); *The three vessels* (p. 364); *Likanga* (p. 309); *The Boy and the Big Snake* (p. 314); *The King's Daughter* (p. 317); and in Les Ba-Ronga : *The mice* (p. 352); *Big Head* (p. 339). I intended adding two tales to this collection : *The Lion's Ring* and *The Unnatural Mother*. Owing to the want of space, I must unfortunately renounce publishing them here. They contain an extraordinary mixture of wholly incongruous elements. Some of these elements are absolutely Bantu, even in relation with local circumstances. Others are evidently exotic. It seems as if Asiatic, Mussulman influences had been the first to transform the Bantu narrative; afterwards European elements made their way into the Native tales, first Portuguese, later on English influences. I hope to publish some day those curious stories; together with the foreign tales contained in "Les Chants et Contes" and in "Les Ba-Ronga", they also prove the essentially plastic character of Bantu narration.

(1) Whirrrr! is the usual way of expressing the *rising* of a quail or a partridge.

CHAPTER III

Music.

Music under a more or less rudimentary form, plays a great part in the Life of the Bantu tribe. Some tribes are more gifted than others in this respect. In the Province of Mozambique the Ba-Chopi are certainly the best musicians, as we shall see. But Thonga also are great singers and players, and their dances are invariably accompanied by music. What is its character? The melodies and rhythms are very difficult to catch, and I do not pretend to give here a full and definite description of Thonga music; but the following specimens will convey a fair idea of it, and the study of the musical instruments will help us, in some measure, to understand their musical system.

A. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

1) Wind Instruments.

The simplest is the *shiwaya*, an empty sala shell, or the shell of a Kafir orange (p. 19): it has two holes, one through which children sing, another which they alternately shut and open, the withdrawal of the hand allowing the sound to be emitted; the result is a monotonous wu-wu-wu, which is sufficient to amuse little boys.

Next in importance comes the *nanga*, (yi-tin) the goatherd's flute, made of the tibia of a goat, or of some other animal, on which the boys play two notes, generally in thirds. This is truly the infancy of art, but the tone of these little flutes is very sweet and wonderfully in keeping with the bush life, the bleating

of the goats and the nudity of the artist! There are many kinds of goatherds' flutes. One is called *ndjwebe* and its sound resembles mbvrrr. . . . mbvrrr. . . . Natives are fond of putting

Women in Muhlaba's old village. *Phot. Lemoir.*

a feather inside their bone flutes in order to keep them clean.

Another more elaborate flute is made of a reed which has a hole at one extremity for the mouth, and three others at the other extremity for the fingers. According to the number of holes stopped, the sound varies. It is called *shitiringo* (Dj.), or

shitloti (Ro.), and Native artists are capable of producing pleasing tunes with it. N° 39 in my collection of tunes is a shitiringo melody, heard on the banks of the Great Tabi.

But the true tinanga are the trumpets which compose the *bunanga*, the band already referred to (I. p. 404) as being one of the manifestations of Court Life. They are also called *timhalamhala*, from the name of the mhalamhala (Hippotragus niger), the large, dark antelope whose horns are employed for the manufacture of these trumpets, together which the horns of the mhala (impala) antelope. These instruments are tuned according to rule. Ten of them, each having a different sound, form a *simo*, a kind of orchestra, completed by the big and the small drum already described. They are used to accompany the special dances which take place in the little Capital of the Ronga clans and in which the players are themselves the dancers, marching behind each other, with peculiar contortions, narrowing and widening their circle according to the time beaten by the drum.

The bunanga players receive a regular training before going to the capital, to play before the chief. When they have prepared the numbers of their programme, they all go to the Capital, each sub-chief leading his band, for a musical contest. The tinduna act as judges. Each *simo* plays in turn. The judges discuss their respective merits, and when they have come to a decision, they call a young man to proclaim the result of the competition. This proclamation is called *ku tjema shibangu*, to cut the contest, and it is performed in a very curious way. The herald has an axe in his hand. With a loud voice, he pronounces the verdict: "So and so played badly; so and so better; the one who played best is so and so" — "Nkino hi nkhensa wa ka man;" then he beats the trunk of a tree with his axe, as if he wished to confirm the decision, and runs away: this to avoid protests and insults from those who did not win!

N° 40 is a tune played by the bunanga. It is very monotonous and the music is evidently not so important as the dance, the rhythm, and the contortions. There are only four notes in this tune. However it is probable that the ten instruments of the simo form a whole octave, with two notes below it, the

same as the ten keys of the timbila which will presently be described. Unfortunately I have not been able to ascertain if this is actually so, having only once witnessed the performance of the bunanga.

2) Stringed Instruments.

As regards stringed instruments, they possess the *unicord harp* called *gubu*. There are two different forms of it; the *shitjendje*, which consists of a bent rod, a bow, both extremities of which are united by a string made of milala palm fibres (nkuha), or a piece of wire. On the lower part of the bow a calabash is fixed as sounding box. The shitjendje is held upright; one hand grasps it at its lower extremity, whilst the other beats on the lower third of the string with a little stick. The hand which grasps the instrument places its finger on this lower third of the string in different places, so as to vary the length and produce different sounds.

In the *nkaku*, the sounding box is fixed in the middle of the bow. From it a wire starts and is tied to the middle of the string, thus dividing it in two equal parts. The instrument is grasped near the calabash, and the fingers are extended on either half of the string to differentiate the sounds. The other hand beats on either side with a stick.

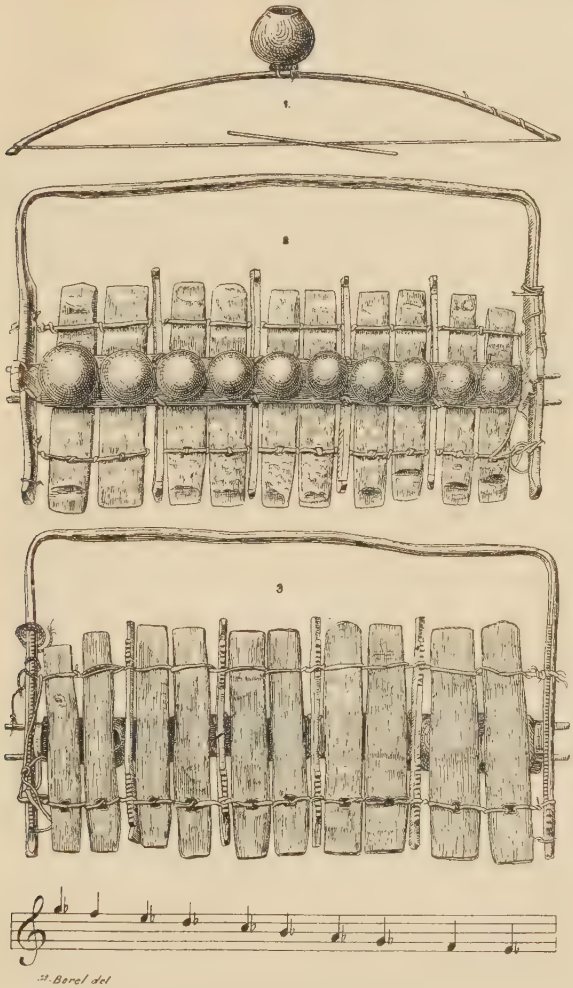
The tune N° 12 was accompanied by a shitjendje.

A gubu player.

3) The timbila or the Bantu xylophone.

The most complete characteristic musical instrument of our tribe is the *timbila*, which may be seen on the adjoining plate showing both the upper and the under side of the very interest-

ing Native piano. It is composed of ten keys, made of very hard wood, attached to each other by straps of leather on a wooden frame consisting of a curved branch. The keys rest on



The timbila and its ten notes.

shells of sala, which act as sounding boxes, and in which two holes are pierced, one in the upper part to receive the sound, and one on the side, covered by a membrane, generally a piece

of a bat's wing, in order to cause the sound to vibrate. This piano is easy to carry. The player puts it in front of him and beats on the keys with one or two sticks, furnished at one extremity, with an india-rubber or a leather ball. (See the cover of Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga).

Comparing it with an European piano I have ascertained that the third key is a G flat, and that, if we strike the following ones, up to the last, we obtain a regular major scale, that of G flat with its proper half tones between the third and fourth and the seventh and eighth intervals. The two lower keys are, the first one E flat, the second one F natural. The interval from E flat to G flat is a minor third, so that, should we start with the lower key and strike the seven following ones, we should obtain a minor scale of E flat corresponding to the major scale of G flat: but it would not entirely resemble our harmonic minor scale as there is no " sensible ", viz., the seventh note of the scale is not raised. Only when descending from the eighth to the first we should have a perfect melodic minor scale. This minor scale, without the raised seventh, is well known in the history of music : it is called the Eolian scale.

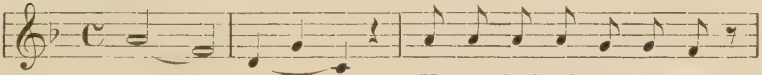
So we find this interesting fact as the result of our examination. The timbila, in its ten notes, contains both the major and minor scales.

Is this accidental ? Or are all the timbila tuned according to the method ? The second hypothesis is highly probable. Of course there may be slight differences between the instruments, which is not astonishing, as they are made with primitive implements by unskilled workmen ; but the proof that they are all made according to a fixed rule is that many timbila are often played together by musicians who form an orchestra. This is rarely the case amongst Thonga but frequently amongst the Ba-Chopi, who are the true " masters " of this instrument. It is said that, in this very musical tribe, Native pianists sit in a line along the street of the village (for their villages are built in a straight line) and play together, all the throng of men dancing in front of them. I witnessed a similar performance when the Crown Prince of Portugal visited Lourenço Marques in 1907.

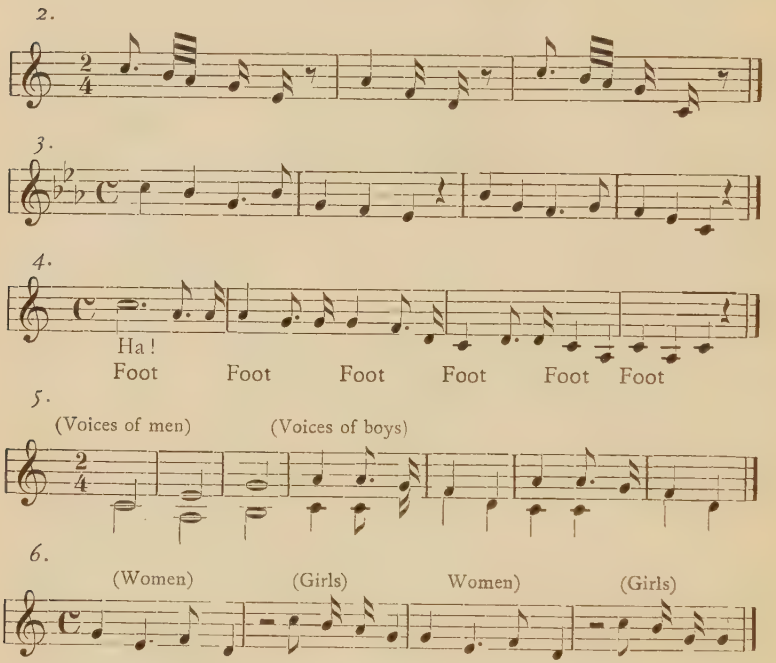
Great feasts were given in his honour; 25.000 armed warriors defiled before him, and thirty timbila played the National Portuguese Anthem. The Administrators who taught these Native artists to play that difficult tune on their xylophones deserve every congratulation! It was wonderful. The melody was quite recognisable and played in perfect tune. Should the timbila not have been tuned to the same pitch, this concert would have become a dreadful cacophony! In the Johannesburg compounds the East Coast boys manufacture timbila themselves, of smaller and larger sizes, some with enormous keys made of common pitch-pine boards, and emitting deep low tones, the sounding boxes being empty oil cans. They succeed in tuning them more or less perfectly. So every citizen of Johannesburg can hear their concerts, and witness their dances, in the Compounds of the Ferreira Mine and elsewhere on Sundays, and, though these ugly pitch pine timbila seem a parody on the beautiful instruments played at home, still the performance is worth a visit!

The presence of the timbila is a proof that these tribes possess a real musical system. The Ba-Chopi are the " masters ", and every one admits it; however the Thonga do not come far behind them, some of them having learnt to manufacture the instrument, and a great many playing upon it quite artistically. In order to define this musical system more precisely, let me now give the forty following tunes as examples, some of which I owe to Mrs Audéoud, whilst the majority have been noted by myself.

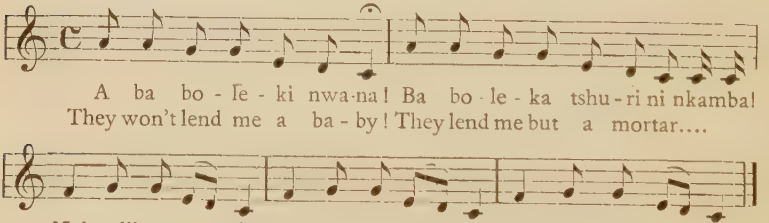
B. A COLLECTION OF THONGA TUNES

Tune 1. The song of the Manyisa bard (p. 167).

Tunes 2. 3. 4. 5. 6., heard far away through the bush in the village of Muzila, sub-chief of Rikatla, in the years 1890-1893. In N° 4 the

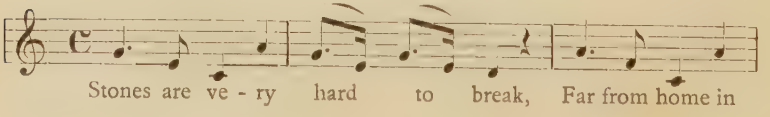
singers were beating the ground with their feet to mark the time. In 5 and 6 boys answered to men and girls to women in the usual antiphonic way.

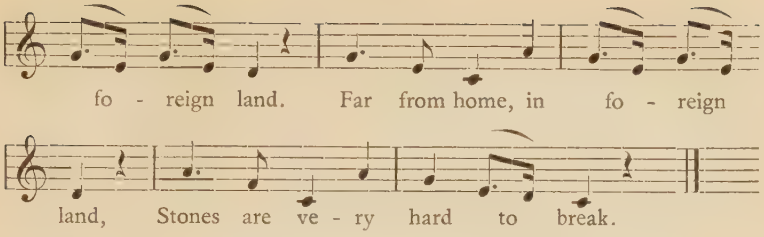


Tune 7. The Complaint of the childless woman (p. 170).

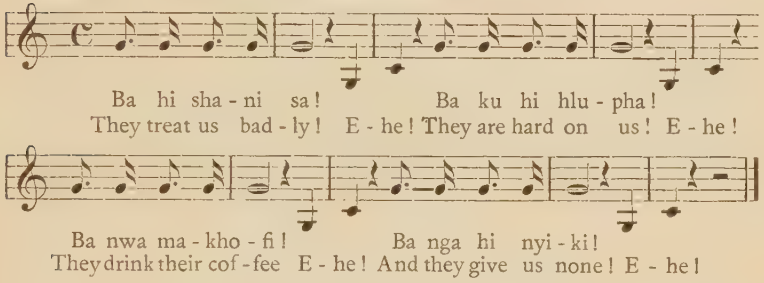

A ba bo - le - ki nwa-na! Ba bo - le - ka tshu - ri ni nkamba!
They won't lend me a ba - by! They lend me but a mortar....
Ngi ndji ma-nga tlu, Ngi ndji shi - mu-ngwe, Ngi n'ta ku u - tla.
Were I an ea - gle! Were I a bird of prey! Quick would I carry it away!

Tune 8. Complaint of the boys going to Johannesburg (p. 170).

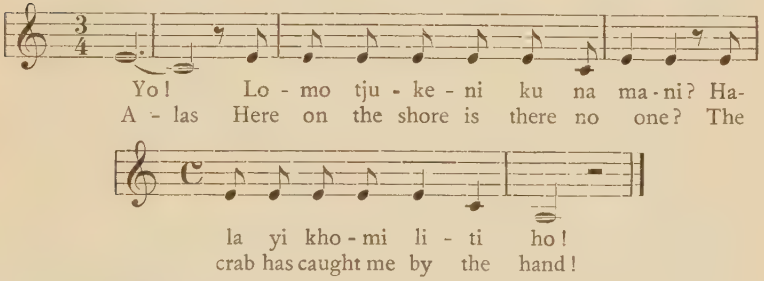




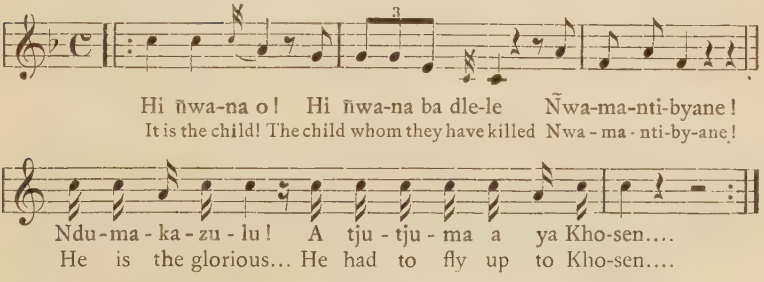
Tune 9. Complaint of the Nkuna boy (p. 170).


Ba hi sha - ni sa! Ba ku hi hlu - pha!
They treat us bad - ly! E - he! They are hard on us! E - he!
Ba nwa ma - kho - fi! Ba nga hi nyi - ki!
They drink their cof - fee E - he! And they give us none! E - he!

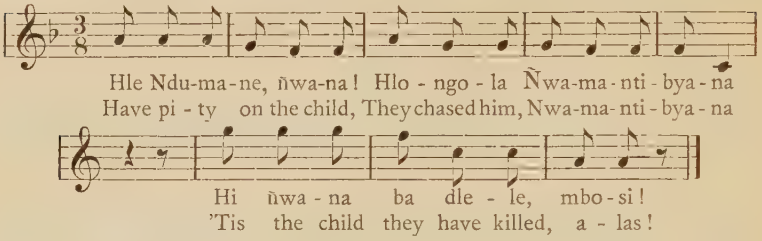
Tune 10. The song of the Crab (p. 171).



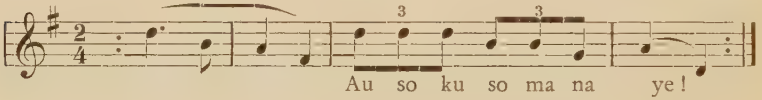
Tune 11. The lament over the deported chief N̂wamantibyane (p. 174).


Hi ñwa-na o! Hi ñwa-na ba dle-le Ñwa-ma-nti-byane!
It is the child! The child whom they have killed Nwa - ma - nti-by-ane!
Ndu-ma - ka - zu - lu! A tju - tju - ma a ya Kho-sen....
He is the glorious... He had to fly up to Kho-sen....

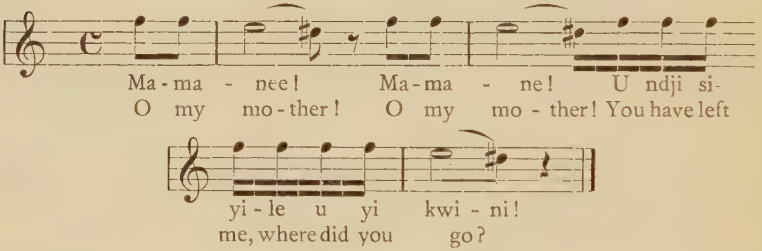
Tune 12. The same lament as sung thirteen years later, with accompaniment of the shitjendje.


Hle Ndu-ma-ne, ñwa-na! Hlo - ngo - la Ñwa-ma-nti - bya - na
Have pi - ty on the child, They chased him, Nwa-ma-nti - bya - na
Hi ñwa - na ba dle - le, mbo - si!
'Tis the child they have killed, a - las!

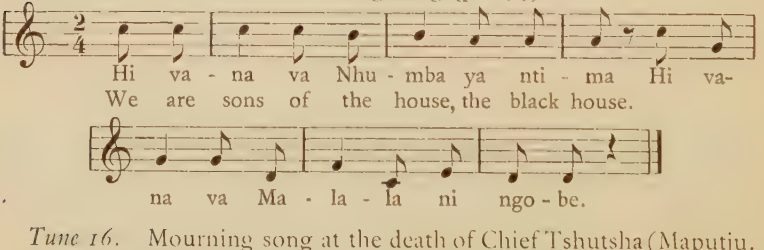
Tune 13. The song of the bride's maids: (p. 181) "Do not go with him". (Mrs. Audéoud, Makulane). (Comp. p. 177).



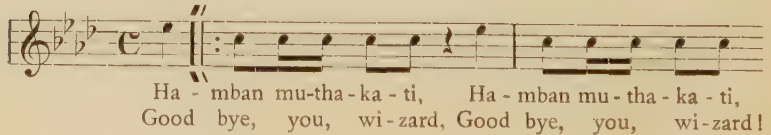
Tune 14. Mourning song heard after the death of Hamunde's wife who was drowned in the lake of Rikatla (1893) (p. 172).

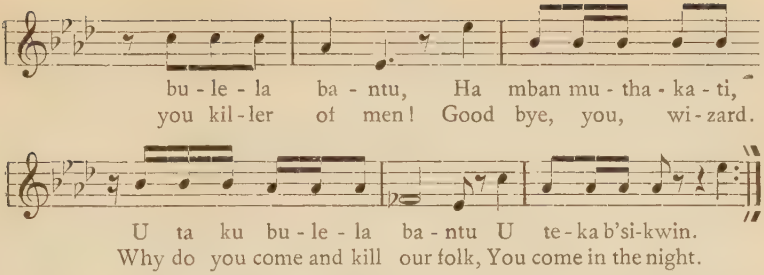


Tune 15. Old Nkuna mourning song (p. 173).

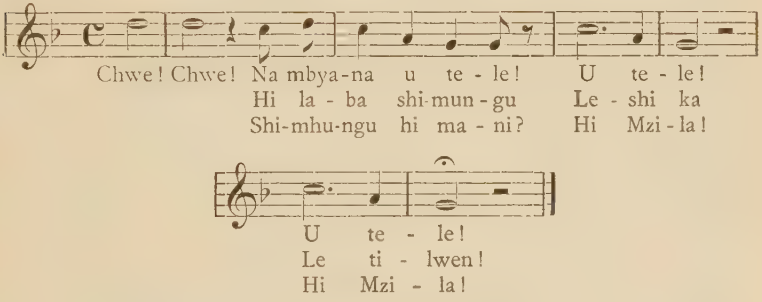


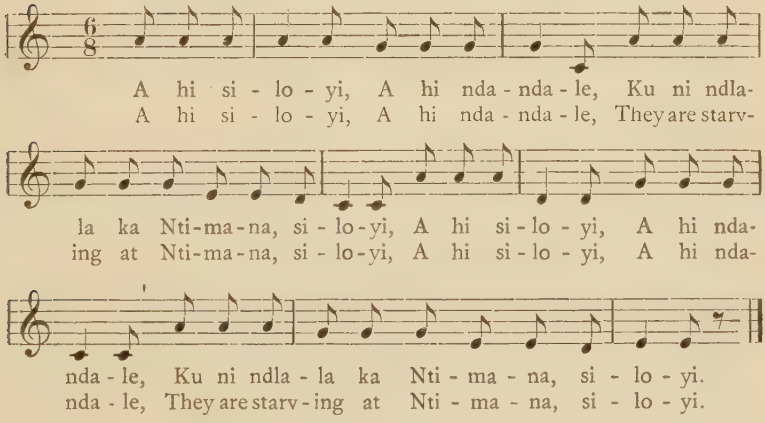
Tune 16. Mourning song at the death of Chief Tshutsha (Maputju. Mrs. Audéoud) (p. 173).

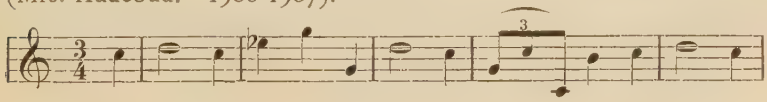
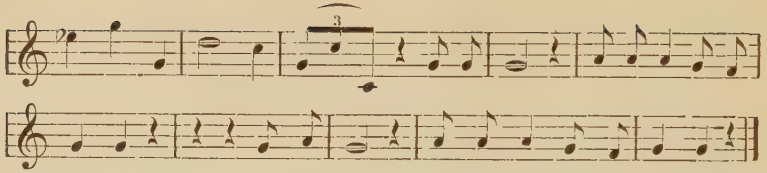


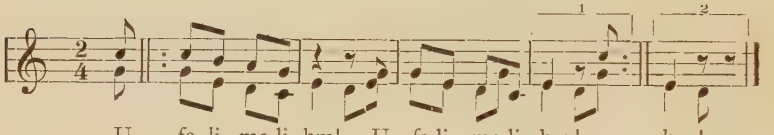

bu - le - la ba - ntu, Ha mban mu - tha - ka - ti,
you kil - ler of men! Good bye, you, wi - zard.
U ta ku bu - le - la ba - ntu U te - ka b'si-kwin.
Why do you come and kill our folk, You come in the night.

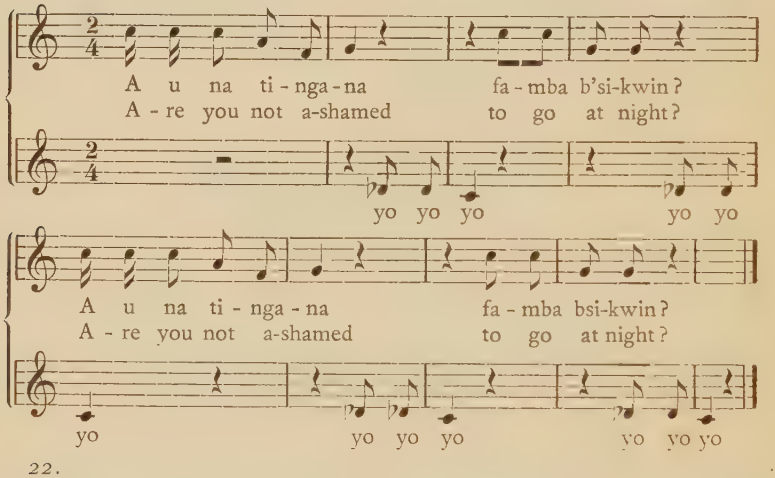
Tune 17. Song of the women carrying "makanye" to Muzila (I. p. 375. II. p. 188).



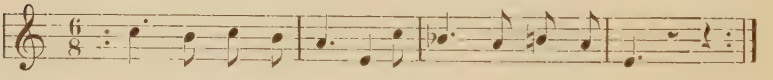
Tune 18. Sailors'song on the Nkomati River (1904) (p. 189).

A hi si - lo - yi, A hi nda - nda - le, Ku ni ndla-
A hi si - lo - yi, A hi nda - nda - le, They are starv-
la ka Nti-ma-na, si - lo-yi, A hi si - lo - yi, A hi nda-
ing at Nti-ma-na, si - lo-yi, A hi si - lo - yi, A hi nda-
nda - le, Ku ni ndla - la ka Nti - ma - na, si - lo - yi.
nda - le, They are starv - ing at Nti - ma - na, si - lo - yi.

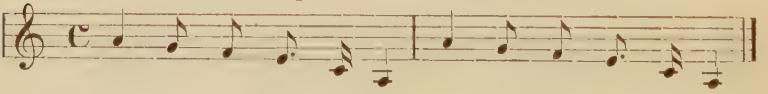
Tunes 19. 20. 21. 22. Sailors' songs on the Maputju River. (Mrs. Audéoud. 1906-1907).

20.

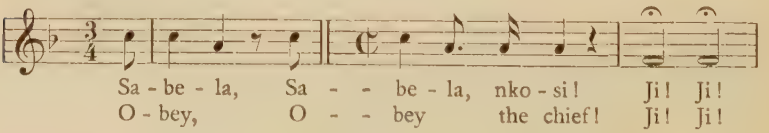


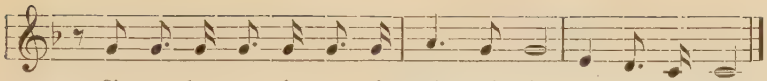
21.

A u na ti-nga-na fa-mba b'si-kwin?
A-re you not a-shamed to go at night?
yo yo yo yo yo
A u na ti-nga-na fa-mba bsi-kwin?
A-re you not a-shamed to go at night?
yo yo yo yo yo yo yo

22.



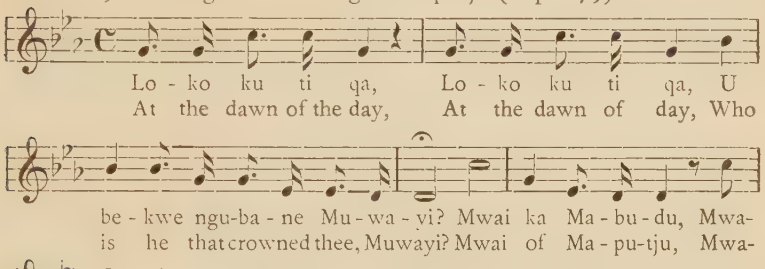
Tune. 23. Carrier's song.

Tune 24. War song executed at the coronation of the Mpfumo chiefs (I. p. 347).





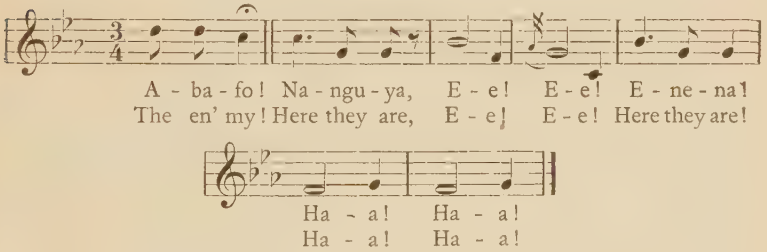
Si ya ku we - la mu - la - mbu mku - lu wa ka nko - si.
Let us go, let us cross the great ri - ver, that of the chief.

Tune 25. The great war song of Maputju (I. p. 175).



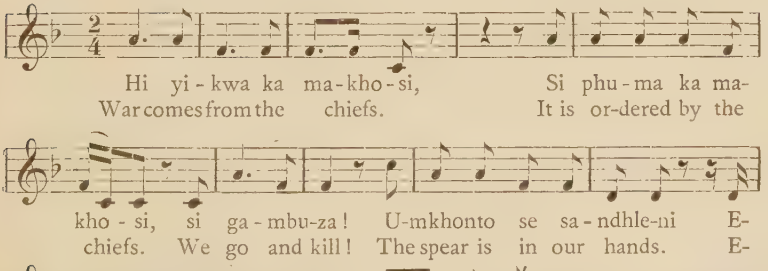
Lo - ko ku ti qa, Lo - ko ku ti qa, U
At the dawn of the day, At the dawn of day, Who
be - kwe ngu-ba - ne Mu - wa - yi? Mwai ka Ma - bu - du, Mwa-
is he that crowned thee, Muwayi? Mwai of Ma - pu-tju, Mwa-
yi, ka Ma - bu - du, U be - kwe ngu - ban!
yi of Ma - pu - tju, Who has crown - ed thee!

Tune 26. Marching song of the army (I. p. 444).



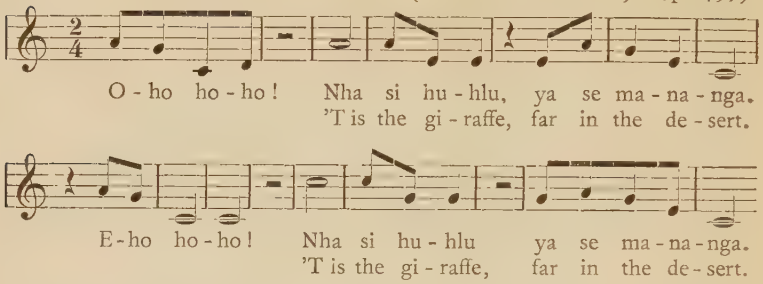
A - ba - fo! Na - ngu - ya, E - e! E - e! E - ne - na!
The en' my! Here they are, E - e! E - e! Here they are!
Ha - a! Ha - a!
Ha - a! Ha - a!

Tune 27. The song of the spear (Nkuna), (I. p. 436).

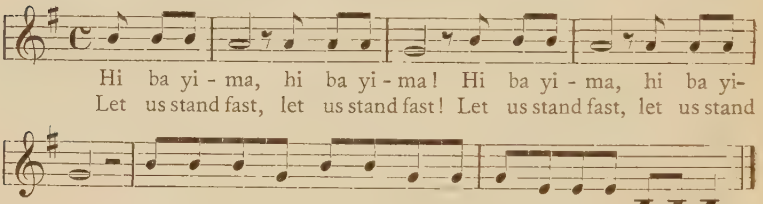


Hi yi - kwa ka ma - kho - si, Si phu - ma ka ma-
War comes from the chiefs. It is or-dered by the
kho - si, si ga - mbu-za! U-mkhonto se sa - ndhle-ni E-
chiefs. We go and kill! The spear is in our hands. E-
ji! E - ji! U mkho-nto u sao go - bee....
ji! E - ji! The spear kills and bends in the wound.

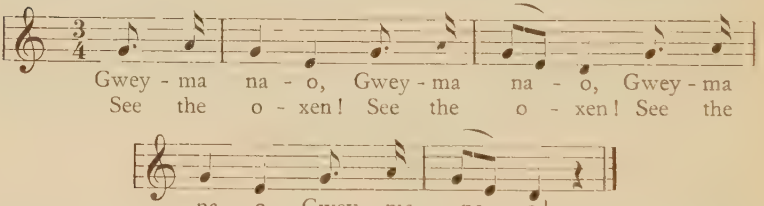
Tune 28. The Giraffe of the desert (Nkuna, Nondwane). I, p. 435).


O - ho ho - ho! Nha si hu - hlu, ya se ma - na - nga.
'T is the gi - raffe, far in the de - sert.
E - ho ho - ho! Nha si hu - hlu ya se ma - na - nga.
'T is the gi - raffe, far in the de - sert.

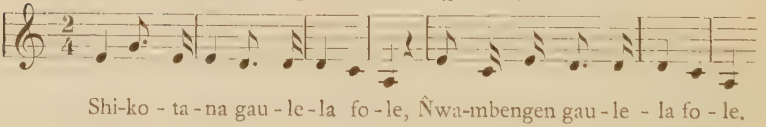
Tune 29. Oldest Nkuna war song (I. p. 436).


Hi ba yi - ma, hi ba yi - ma! Hi ba yi - ma, hi ba yi-
Let us stand fast, let us stand fast! Let us stand fast, let us stand
ma! Mi te - ka bu - re - na mi nyi - ka ti nu-ba ta ba-mbe!
fast! Do not let your strength go, it would help the en'my to con-quer!

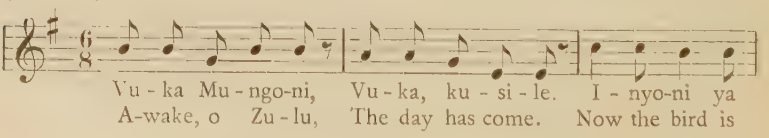
Tune 30. Childrens'song welcoming the trek oxen (p. 189).

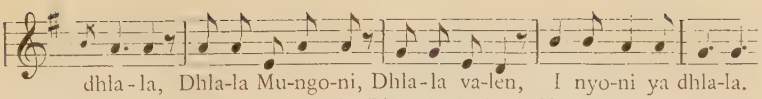


Tune 31. Children' song to the owl (p. 189).

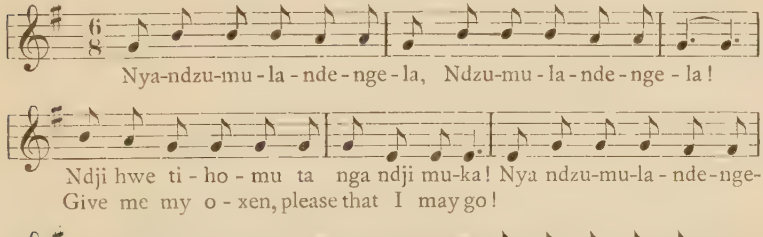


Tune 32. Incantation to the spirit during exorcism (p. 190) (Part VI).

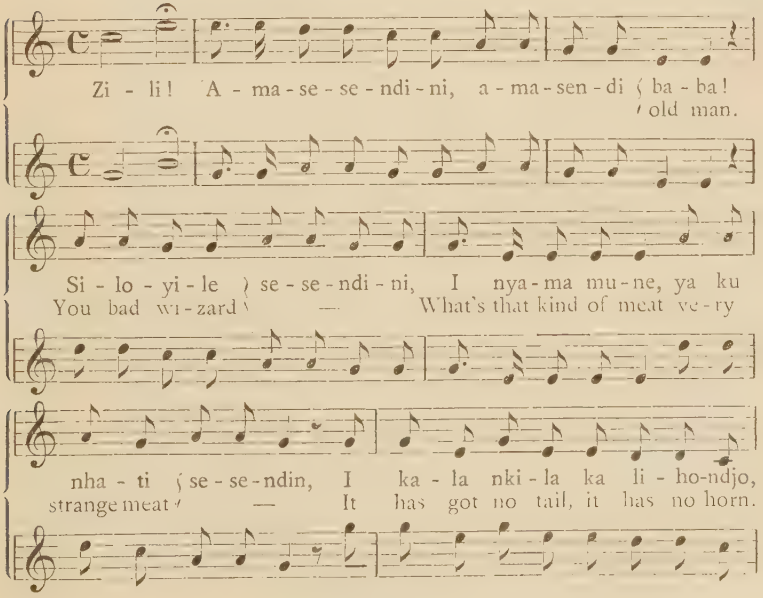


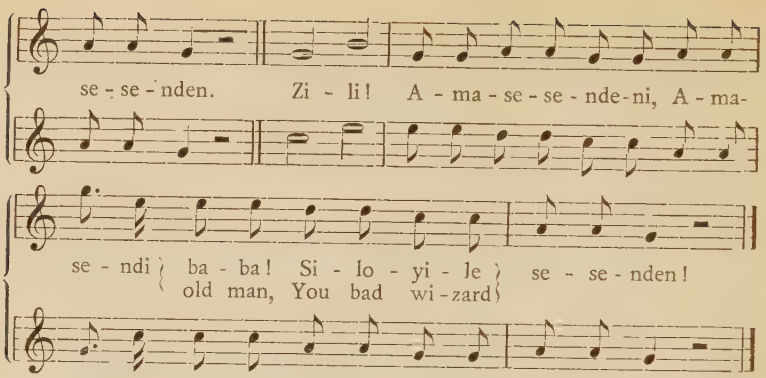


Tune 33. Song of the tale of the ogre Nyandzumulandengela (Timbila song).

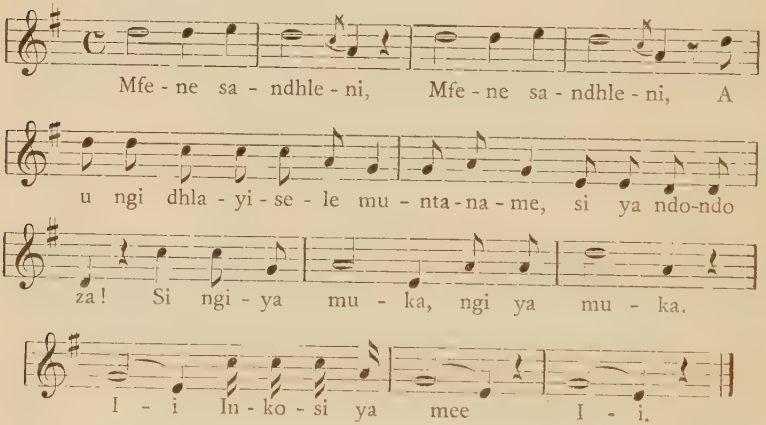

Nya-ndzu-mu-la-nde-nge-la, Ndzu-mu-la-nde-nge-la!
Ndji hwe ti-ho-mu ta nga ndji mu-ka! Nya ndzu-mu-la-nde-nge-
Give me my o-xen, please that I may go!
la, Ndzu-mu-la-nde-nge-la! U-te-ki-le mi mhu-
You have ta-ken me and
nu u mi-ta!
you swal lowed me!

Tune 34. Song in two parts, in the tale of Zili (p. 242).

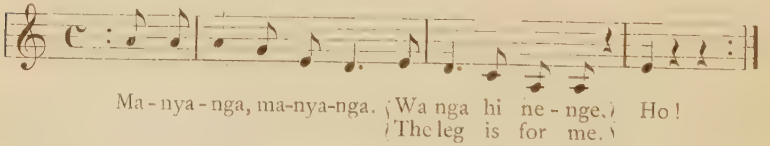

Zi-li! A-ma-se-se-ndi-ni, a-ma-sen-di (ba-ba!
/ old man.
Si-lo-yi-le) se-se-ndi-ni, I nya-ma mu-ne, ya ku
You bad wi-zard \ — What's that kind of meat ve-ry
nha-ti (se-se-ndin, I ka-la nki-la ka li-ho-ndjo,
strange meat / — It has got no tail, it has no horn.



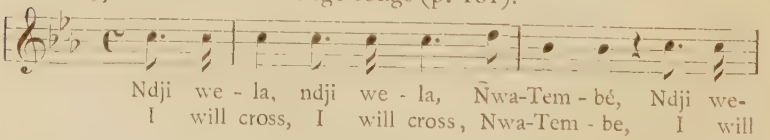
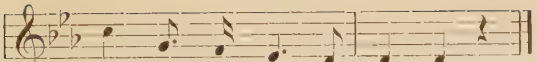
Tune 35. Song of the mother whose child has been carried off by the Baboon (p. 245).

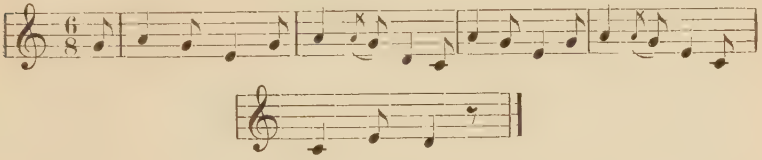
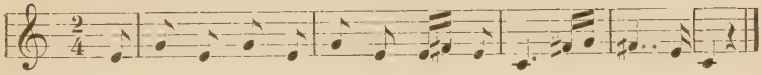
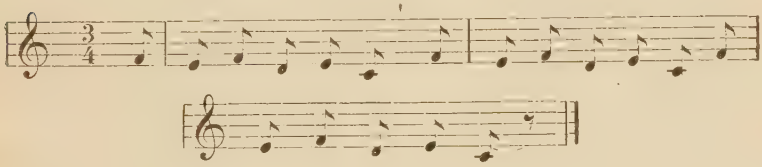


Tune 36. Incantation by which hyena-men are transformed into hyenas, in an ogre-tale (p. 196).



Tune 37. One of the Ronge songs (p. 181).



Tune 38. A tune played on the shitiringo flute on the banks of the Great Tabi (p. 250).

Tune 39. A shitiringo tune from Shiluvane.

Tune 40. A bunanga tune (I. p. 404, II. p. 251).

C. THE MUSICAL SYSTEM OF THE THONGA.

After having studied the instruments used by our tribe, and a certain number of tunes, we can try to come to some conclusions as regards its musical system. Let it be said, first of all, that such conclusions are only provisional, and I do not pretend that they are definitive. Noting Native tunes is a very delicate task, as nothing is more plastic than sound, and however accurate we have tried to be, we may have introduced something of our own into this transcript. Nothing but phonograph records would be scientifically beyond suspicion! However there is between all these tunes enough similarity, enough family likeness, to convince students of primitive music that they are genuine, and that we are entitled to draw some inferences from this material.

As regards *rhythm*, it is generally very well marked, being emphasised by the accompanying instruments, and the movements of dancers: arms lowered in cadence, weapons brandished, feet stamping the ground at regular intervals, etc. However I did not always find it easy to catch, and there are certainly sudden changes in the time which put the hearer out of his reckoning. I heard people assert that in primitive music rhythm is by far the most interesting element. Anybody having witnessed a war-dance, or the performance of the East Coast boys in the Johannesburg compounds, will be able to certify that there is a wonderful sense of time in these productions. The binary combinations, 2/4 and 4/4 time, are met with more frequently than the ternary modes, 3/4 and 6/8.

The *melodic system* is evidently based on the scale of seven intervals, just the same as our own music. The presence of the scale as underlying all this music is proved by the preceding tunes, but more specially, as we noticed, by the timbila. Most of the tunes could be played on this primitive piano, which is evidently constructed according to the rules of the ordinary scale. I came to the same conclusion when teaching the sol-fa notation to raw Natives, and I remember having had a class of boys, just from the bush, in Lourenço Marques, who, at the first lesson, after a quarter of an hour, were singing our scale without difficulty : that which seemed to be unknown was the name of the seven notes do, re, mi, etc., but the sounds themselves, in their regular succession, were quite familiar to their ears. One hears sometimes of a scale which has but three or four notes. Does it exist? Is not this succession of sounds "given" to the human ear, as well as the succession of colours in the rain-bow to the human eye? As we shall see, Natives do not distinguish all the colours. They call by the same word, *libungu*, yellow, and red; black and dark blue being also both *ntima*. Their eye has not yet been fully trained. Their ear seems to me to be in better condition, and to have attained a distinct perception of the elementary sounds.

Let it be remarked, however, that there are differences amongst them. Some sing more in tune than others. Often

they are a third or a quarter of a tone flat or sharp. I might say they do not precisely sing out of tune, they are not yet true on the note. But this will come with due training. I very rarely met with Natives with no idea of tune. This occurrence is, I think, more frequent amongst the Whites than amongst the Blacks. As regards accidentals, I have seen some boys mastering the chromatic scale without much difficulty. But sharps and flats, viz., sounds which do not bear the ordinary, regular relation to those preceding or following them, are generally very difficult to catch, sometimes out of their reach altogether. The use of European instruments will raise them to that higher level in the course of time.

But let us confine ourselves to their primitive state. They not only know our *major scale*, but frequently sing in the *minor one*. On the timbila, as we saw, they can play in the eolian method, viz., in a minor scale in which there is no raised seventh. In fact, even in the distinctly minor tunes, this raised seventh is never met with. We often notice the passage from the major to the minor, or vice versa, and our collection affords two striking examples of this musical procedure : in tune N° 33, the melody after 6 bars recommences a third lower: this is a characteristic timbila tune; the melody, started on the third key, is again played starting on the first one, so as to pass from the major to the minor. In N° 25, at the end of the second bar, the reverse phenomenon takes place. The melody was first minor; it is raised a third higher and becomes major for a while, returning later on to the minor.

The *character* of most of the Bantu melodies is rather sad, and this is generally explained by the assertion that they are in the minor key. I do not think this is true. Most of my tunes, 25, are undoubtedly major, 10 are minor, and 5 are mixed or doubtful. This impression comes rather from the fact that the melody almost invariably begins on a high note and descends to deep notes, often ending by the lowest. The song starts brilliantly, triumphantly, and goes down, down, till it dies away on the lowest note. Hence the melancholic impression these tunes convey. The melody is very short, as a rule; sometimes

quite rudimentary; its constant repetitions also produce a monotonous effect which enhances the sadness of the music. A professional musician, after having perused these tunes, once said to me : " Well, they are not "jolly good fellows" your black people ! Not a single tune for dancing ! Nothing merry about this music ! "

The rules of *Native harmony* are very difficult to detect. They certainly exist. When you hear a chorus of beautiful voices singing in two or three parts, you at once perceive great differences between their system of harmony and ours. These choruses are by no means disagreeable, but are very strange to our European ear. It would be most interesting to catch them and note them down, but it would be a long job ! I have succeeded at least in fixing the two parts of the song of Zili, which can be considered typical; I owe it to two girls of Lourenço Marques, who had clear voices and lent themselves willingly and with great patience to the long inquiry. One will notice a curious succession of fourths and sixths, quite unusual in our music. The professional to whom I submitted this song told me it reminded him of similar chords found in the works of mediaeval composers like Bianchois, and Adam de la Halle. The fourth seems to be more acceptable to the Bantu ear than the third or the fifth. A collection of timbila music would be of great assistance in coming to a conclusion on the subject, as the artists invariably play with two hands, and a score of phonographic records taken in Johannesburg of a good player would be very valuable. Not having had the opportunity of making such an investigation, I must be satisfied to commend it to those who have time to devote themselves to it.

To sum up the result of this inquiry, I may say that Thonga music has certainly reached a certain stage of development, being based upon the seven intervals scale, recognizing the major and minor keys, and following a certain system of harmony; but the melodies are still short and rudimentary and, although they may attain a real grandeur when performed by hundreds of warriors, they are generally monotonous and sad. Notwithstanding this, the black race is essentially musical; its gifts in this domain

are real, and if properly developed they will certainly produce remarkable results in time.

CONCLUSION ON PART V.

The Problem of Native Education.

The study which we have made of the Bantu Intellect has paved the way for us to consider this great question, which is one of the most important features of the Native problem in South Africa.

The wild buffalo has been made prisoner! On its neck a yoke has been placed. — The savage mind of the Bantu is now being trained to civilised methods, and the Elementary School gathers in goatherds of the bush, all over South Africa. More than 175.000 children follow a course of instruction. The wild buffalo has bowed its neck with wonderful readiness! It is one of the promising features of the actual situation of the Black race that it has so quickly accepted the school. This proves its vitality : it understands that the acquisition of knowledge is, for it, the only way of adapting itself to the altered circumstances. So, though primary education has nowhere yet been proclaimed as obligatory, children leave their flocks and learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. This phenomenon is universal, and is not only witnessed in the towns, were big boys of twenty or thirty years of age crowd in the evening schools, patiently writing letters on the slate with a clumsy hand, but in the most remote parts of the country, everywhere where a missionary or a Native teacher opens a school.

This spread of Instruction is bound to have great results for the future of the race, and of its intellect ; so it is of the utmost importance that rational and wise methods be adopted in the conduct of this work, in order to help and not to injure the Bantu mind. Unfortunately it can not be said that such has always been the case in past times. To avoid mistakes and errors I beg to advance as the first principle of Native Education :

1) The Necessity of a special Native Curriculum.

May I first relate a personal recollection ?

When a young missionary on the Rikatla Station, I had the great misfortune to lose my Native teacher. He was not satisfied with the pay he received from the Mission, so he took leave without ceremony and went to town to earn more money. I remained alone to attend

to all the spiritual and educational duties of the Station. So far I had left the whole charge of the school to him. Now I was obliged to go myself and meet each day the twenty or thirty boys and girls of the class. But what I thought to be a very sad occurrence proved a real blessing. Having to teach in a Native school for some months, I gained experience which was indeed very precious, and I at once saw that, with a language totally different from our own, having been subject to other influences, to another training in their homes, Native children could not be taught exactly on the same lines as Europeans; in altered circumstances, other methods had to be employed. In which way, and how far, the training had to be different was a very interesting question and its solution was worth every effort on the part of the friends of the Native.

What was my surprise, on visiting Cape Colony some years later, to see that, in this most advanced South African State, the same course of instruction was followed in the schools for the Natives as in those for White children! The former had to go through the VI classical Standards just in the same way as the sons of the English or Dutch colonists. What was the reason of this strange provision? Was it in the name of a liberal and generous negrophilism that Blacks were treated exactly as Whites? I was told that such was not precisely the explanation of the case, that it came rather from the indifference with which Native Education was regarded: the Authorities had not taken the trouble to inquire into the matter, and see if this was the proper way of dealing with it. Natives, as a rule, were satisfied, believing that the more they were treated as Europeans, the more did they really resemble them. But there were signs of uneasiness. School Inspectors, intelligent Natives, were noticing that such a system ended in a superficial and useless education, in a denationalisation of Native children without any real progress towards a more civilised condition. In fact, the agitation on this question led to an official inquiry conducted by a Select Committee of the House of Parliament, and a number of complaints were brought forward condemning this system as actually harmful to the Native pupils.

Three times the South African General Missionary Conference discussed this important subject; it had full right to do so; it was its undoubted duty: Native Education in South Africa is in the hands of the missionary bodies who provide the teachers, found the schools, the State only exercising a general supervision and paying part of the salaries. So on two occasions I had the privilege of impressing

upon this Assembly the necessity of a special Native course of instruction, once in Johannesburg in 1904 and once in Bloemfontain in 1909. (1)

Before explaining the reasons for this necessity, let me remark that, *a priori*, it is most reasonable to make a difference between the instruction given to a young savage just emerging from the bush, and that afforded to a civilised child. The VI Standards of the British Curriculum are indeed an excellent programme, and many educationists are so convinced of its perfection that they would apply it to all the children on the face of the earth. However, we see that, in foreign countries like France and Germany, where the schools have reached the same degree of excellency, the curriculum is slightly different. It seems as if, in a programme of primary education, there were two series of elements : the universal elements, which every human being must be taught if he wishes to be considered as educated, and the particular or national elements which answer to the special wants or gifts of the various nations. So it might be said that the English course has a more practical, the German a more scientific, and the French a more literary character. If such differences exist amongst the civilised nations, is it not reasonable to expect to find them when educating White children and children born in the bush, far away from European influences, in a totally different environment, amidst totally different traditions ?

But the necessity for a special course of instruction for Natives arises not only from the differences between the Bantu and the European mind. It is forced upon us by the fact that these tribes possess and use their own languages to the exclusion of any other : the centre of the problem is in the presence of these languages, and this being the most important point in the discussion, I must dwell at length on it.

2) The place of the Vernacular in Native Education.

If we want to express a sound judgment on this subject, another question of a more general character must first be considered. What will be the fate of the Native languages in the evolution of the Black race in South Africa ?

(1) See Reports of the South African General Missionary Conference of 1904 : " The place of the Native Language in the Native Education ", and in the Report of 1909 : Native Education and Native Literature ". Compare Journal of the African Society. October 1905.

Some superficial observers have expressed their conviction that these "disagreeable dialects" are bound to disappear in the near future before the all powerful civilisation and its vehicle, the European languages. This opinion is devoid of any substantial foundation. In the last 20 or 30 years, the use of Native languages has not decreased at all, nor is there any sign that the Black population will abandon them. In some places, in the Orange Province, a kind of Low Dutch has superseded Sesuto, or the old Hottentot dialect, but this is owing to the disintegration of the tribes and the prevalence of European influences. Where the Bantu still adhere to their tribal system, or where they dwell in locations, they keep their native tongue and they are quite right in doing so: these languages are by all means worthy of preservation, as has been shown in the first chapter of our Part V. They are not degenerate, they are not inexpressive, they are rich in their way, and, at any rate, they are admirably in keeping with those who invented them. Thus they are by far the best medium for the expression of their thoughts. I may quote here the Thonga proverb: "The strength of the crocodile is water." When speaking his own tongue, the Native is a crocodile in water. He is strong, he is eloquent. he is somebody! When speaking a foreign language, most of them are caricatures. Of course some of them master English perfectly, or Portuguese, or Dutch, if they have been in a long and intimate contact with White people. But this is a chance which occurs to very few, and will probably not be the lot of the majority as long as social and political circumstances have not undergone an entire change. If our European patois have been preserved for centuries in so many countries where they have had to fight against a literary language, against books, School and Church, how much more probable is it that Sesuto, Zulu and Thonga will remain the languages of the South African tribes! So the Vernacular will live, and it is worth being used both as a medium for instruction and as an object of study in Native schools.

On the other hand, the European languages make great progress amongst the Natives, and it is but natural and good that it should be so. The South African Native instinctively understands that he must be able to converse with his White master in his tongue, as the White master is much too busy (and perhaps too lazy) to learn the language of his boy. The most he can concede, I mean the White master, is to speak a smattering of the "Kitchen Kafir", that most miserable mixture of Zulu, Dutch, English and Portuguese, without grammatical construction, which flourishes on the docks and in the stores of

half civilised South Africa. To kill this execrable product more promptly, let the Natives learn the European language properly as quickly as possible. The Governments desire it, the storekeepers long for it, the mistress of the house demands it; and the missionaries have nothing against it!

In fact the *South African tribe must be bi-lingual:* the vernacular remaining the language of the home, of the soul, of the religion, of the intercourse between the Blacks; and the European language, English, or Portuguese, or Dutch, as the case may be, being used in the ever increasing relations with White people. That the race can attain such a level is beyond doubt: its literary ability is quite equal to the effort.

If these premises be true, what conclusion can we draw from them as regards Native Education? The Native child enters school knowing his vernacular only. He must leave school, having acquired a real training of the mind, and having become at the same time a useful member of the community, two aims, the educational and the practical, which must not be sacrificed the one to the other. How shall we reach them both? I consider the question more especially from the point of view of language.

Without entering into technical details, let me say that Native primary education ought to comprise three stages:

1) *The Vernacular Stage*, a period of two years during which pupils, who are just commencing, learn to read and write their own language. This will form a sure foundation which will be useful to them all their life time. In this stage, the European language is taught by ear only, colloquially, according to the method of the Berlitz School, as much as possible by establishing a direct relation between objects seen and the foreign words learned. This period corresponds to Sub-Standards A and B.

2) *The Mixed Stage,* corresponding to Standards I, II, III of the English course, forms the transition. The pupils are still taught through the medium of their own tongue; they receive lessons on its admirable and so regular grammar, until they are able to parse sentences, a very good exercise which will accustom their minds to distinguish and to classify (1). But Readers in an European language are now put into

(1) This teaching of the Native grammar to Native pupils has been given in the Swiss Mission schools for years, and found to be very interesting. I am glad to see that Bishop Cameron, of Cape Town, recommended it in the following words: "In order to train the mind and understand the process of

their hands, and they read them, the teachers always taking care to avoid a mere memorising of words without understanding their meaning. For this purpose we recommend bilingual books during this stage, books containing a literal translation of the text in the Native language on the opposite page.

3) *The European Stage,* corresponding to Standards IV, V, VI. Some contact is still kept with the vernacular in this stage by reading the best of Native literature, when available ; but here the Native curriculum comes nearer to the European, some subjects, however, such as history, being taught in a somewhat different way, to answer to the needs of Natives. The European language, English, or Dutch, or Portuguese, is employed as a medium as much as possible.

This division into three stages will provide a healthy evolution from the untrained bush life to the adult and civilised life, and it will destroy as little as possible the character of the Native.

I cannot here explain all the details of the course of instruction which I proposed to the Bloemfontein Conference, in 1909, and which has been published in the Report. I only add that after an interesting discussion, this assembly passed a resolution, approving the system of the three stages proposed, which in the English Colonies would be termed : the Vernacular, Anglo-Vernacular and English stages. In the Mozambique Province, the Governor General Freire d'Andrade adopted a similar plan, combining it with the Portuguese Code of Education. Lately Natal also changed its Code of Native Education exactly on the lines indicated in the Bloemfontein Conference. When will the Cape Province take a definite step in the same direction ?

As regards the Transvaal authorities, they only began to take an interest in Native Education after the Anglo-Boer war. Provisional Standards were adopted with two Sub-Standards in which the requirements, as regards English, were very modest. The study of the Native language was nowhere mentioned ; the Vernacular was entirely lost of sight. " Teach it as much as you like and have time to do it ", said the Department, " but we cannot take it into account ". However, such a recommendation cannot easily be carried out. A subject not mentioned in the curriculum, not included in the examinations, will never be properly studied. Moreover this system gave rise to the following great difficulty : Native children, on their first arrival at the school, had to be provided with two books : the Vernacular

thought, the Kafir grammer which is elaborate, logical and on the whole regular, is a much more satisfactory instrument than the English grammar."

Reader and the English Primer. So they had to begin by learning the same letters with two different values, *a* being pronounced as the Italian *a*, in the Bantu orthography, and as *é*, the French *é*, in the English book; *e* being respectively the English *a* and the French *i*; *i* the Engish *e* and the French *ae*; *u* the French *ou* and the English *you!* The case is almost as bad with the consonants! Is this course commendable from a pedagogic point of view? Is is not cruel to force pupils, who are just beginners, to learn two alphabets at the outset? And are we not right in claiming that one of the axioms of Native Education is the exclusion of any European book, as long as the child is still learning to read his Native Reader? Otherwise, the result is deplorable. A teacher in Cape Colony, having to examine pupils taught in out-stations according to such methods, said to me: "They are supposed to have passed Standard III. They easily read a St. III Reader, but they do not understand a word of it, and when I examine them in Kafir, they are unable to read the first Kafir Reader." So the result of this method has not been more favourable to the English language than it has to the Vernacular. Four years of study on those lines have only led to a useless memorising of English words, and an almost complete inability to read Kafir. Out-station teachers may be blamed for this deplorable result; but antipedagogic methods, or rather the want of reasonable methods, have had a great part in bringing it about.

The system I now advocate, insisting, as it does, on a real understanding of all the subjects taught, is designed to correct the great fault in Native Education all over South Africa. The Bantu mind is endowed with a wonderful memory, as we have seen. Moreover, being the mind of a primitive race, it has a strong tendency to imitation. Hence the fact that Native children (and often teachers) are perfectly satisfied with a parrot-like learning of words and sounds which they do not understand. They commit to memory entire books in a purely mechanical manner, without bothering at all about the meaning of the words: this knowledge is but a varnish which will disappear as soon as they have left the school, and most of them leave after Standard III. This parrot-like way of learning must be combated with the utmost determination and, knowing that this is a weak point of the Bantu of this and perhaps of the next generation, the Native curriculum must provide means of checking the spread of this evil, which I ventured to call the mildew of Native Education (See Rep. of the Bloemfontein Conference, page 20).

3) The want of the Arithmetical sense.

In the preceding pages, I have dealt with the best means of developing those literary faculties of the mind which are so prominen amongst the Bantu tribes. A system of education ought to foster the natural abilities and gifts of a race. It ought also to remedy its defects, and a thorough teaching of arithmetic must be given in the Native schools precisely because the mathematical sense is feeble in most of the Native pupils. The method generally followed is to teach them European numeration. I think it is the only reasonable course, as their own system is much too complicated, and no elaborate arithmetical work would be possible if counting were done in the Vernacular. The danger which we meet in this branch of study is once again the tendency to be satisfied with mere mechanical work in which reasoning plays no part. Beware if you see the eyes of your pupils shine, and their heart thrill when merely reducing feet into inches, or yards into feet! Complete your teaching by giving them a problem which appeals to their faculty of reasoning!

4) Seven principles of Native Education.

As a conclusion, I would say, Native Education, in order rightly to direct the evolution of the race, must be actuated by the following principles, the four first ones being a résumé of the foregoing dissertation, and the three last ones being also of great importance :

1) The teaching of Vernacular reading and writing is the basis of the whole edifice.

2) The teaching of the European languages must be given at first orally and never allowed to become a merely mechanical effort of memory.

3) Arithmetic must play a considerable part in the programme and be taught as a means of developing the reasoning faculty which is still dormant.

4) The study of the Vernacular Grammar is a first-rate means of developing the sense of classification amongst young pupils.

5) The Native curriculum must try to supplement other wants peculiar to the Natives. They have not been taught a number of common scientific facts which White children naturally learn through their

environment : so they ought to be given an elementary course of science in order to check ideas of witchcraft and other superstitions.

6) The Industrial Training is of the first necessity to a race which, though much gifted in this domain, has still to be civilised and can aspire to something better than mere uncultured labour. Agriculture ought preferentially to be taught, and, where it is possible, each school should have its experimental garden subsidised by the State.

7) Last but not least, Native Education ought to give a prominent place to the religious and moral element, these being of the utmost importance in the uplifting of a race in which character is weak and whose religion is still unrelated with morality. But this question already introduces us into another domain and will be more appropriately dealt with at the close of the last part, into which we now enter.

I do not deal here with the problem of Higher, Normal and University education for the Natives. These also ought not to be servile imitations of White methods, but so organised as to answer to the special requirements of the Natives, and I would refer the reader to the Report of the Bloemfontein Conference on this point; all those who have taken the trouble of studying this question will agree that such higher education ought to be liberally offered to the Black race. The more qualified physicians, advocates, or ministers can be trained, the stronger will be the elite which, sooner or later, must take the lead in the development of the race. Is it not in the interest of all that superstition should disappear, hygiene be taught, justice administered irrespective of colour, and Christian morality be preached ? Natives are ready to pay for these higher qualifications. I do not see any reason why they should be prevented from acquiring them, if their intellect be equal to the task.

SIXTH PART

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE AND SUPERSTITIONS.

The mystery of the Psychic life! There is a mystery in any form of life, be it vegetal, animal, or intellectual. But how much deeper and more difficult is it to solve, when dealing with those higher manifestations of psychic life, those which seem peculiar to mankind: Religion, Morality and also, besides them, Magic of all kinds, Divination, Spirit-Possession, Witchcraft, all of which we include under the name of Superstitions. Amongst savage people Religion and Magic, Morality and Taboo, are not yet clearly differentiated. I think they proceed from different sources; meanwhile they are more or less confounded in the rites, and this makes them all the more difficult to understand. I do not now pretend to throw a perfect light on the dim, confused notions of the Bantu soul. The race is so little philosophical that it can admit conflicting ideas to an extent which would be impossible in more rational, more intellectually developed minds. My aim is, as ever, to be as impartial as possible. I have no preconceived idea about what was, or ought to have been, the primitive man. I believe the evolutionist theory is supported by a great number of probabilities and is the best solution of many problems. Yet, I think it is but an hypothesis, and it would be unscientific to regard it as a dogma to the strengthening of which Science must devote all its labours. I may try to reach some conclusions at the end of this VI[th] Part; but my intention is to treat this subject by merely faithfully recording my own observations: professional anthropologists, or historians of Religion can do what they like with this mate-

rial, my only ambition is that it should be wholly reliable.

In a first chapter, I will try to record the ideas of the Thonga on Nature and Man; this is what might be called their *Natural Philosophy*, if the term were not somewhat pretentious. In the second, the distinctively *religious notions and rites* will be explained. In the third I will describe the manifold manifestations of their *Magic*, in which I include Practice of Medicine, Witchcraft, Possessions and Divination. In the fourth, the question of *Morality and Taboo* will be considered.

CHAPTER I

Conceptions of the Thonga regarding Nature and Man.

A. CONCEPTIONS REGARDING NATURE.

1. *Origin of the World.*

"What is it that created Heaven and Earth? — Nature!" This proverb or riddle, already quoted (p. 161), is perhaps the only answer the Thonga give to the question of creation. *Ntumbuluku*, the word I translate by Nature, comes from *ku tumbuluka*, to happen, to be formed. It does not convey any clear idea of a Creation. The sense of causality is very little developed amongst most of the Thonga. So they are contented with this rather pantheistic notion, beyond which many very educated scientists of our age will not trespass: Nature created the world, and they do not search further. Some say that the originator of Heaven and Earth is Rivimbi, or Kudjwana, or Nwari. The two first of these names are the Venda or Pedi names of the first human beings; Nwali or Myali is a god of the Ba-Nyai whose legend has spread amongst the Northern clans of the Thonga, especially the Hlengwe and the Maluleke. It is possible that the tribes, from which these names have been borrowed, truly believe these personages to have created the world. In the

story of Nwari, for instance, it is said that when he lived, stones were not yet hard, and so the implements of the first men left their impression on the rocks (Comp. I. p. 21). But they are in the first place the *creators of mankind*, as we shall notice.

I believe that the *origin of man* preoccupies the Bantu mind much more than the origin of the world as a whole. They can live their whole life without being troubled by this question, which has perplexed so many hearts in other lands. Only a few particularly serious minds, those who are the religious geniuses of the tribe, longingly search for light on this subject. I have met with one of these. His name was Rangane, and he came from the Maluleke district. When quite a young boy he often asked his mother who it was who had made heaven and earth. She told him: "It is Khudjwana. But he died long ago. Even the place where he was buried is unknown." This did not satisfy the curiosity of the child: so she sent him to the old men to question them. They answered by the myth of the reed which we shall explain later on, saying: "All men have originated from a reed." This also failed to satisfy the thirst of this inquiring soul wanting to know whence everything proceeds, and he told me how gladly surprised he was when, having come to Pretoria for work, he heard a convert saying that God had created everything and teaching the Christian explanation of the world. I remember his face beaming with joy when he told his story. But such earnest, philosophical natures are very rare amongst Natives, and Rangane was an exception. He died when still at the beginning of his course of study; and he was vastly superior to most of his comrades as regards religious perception.

II. *The celestial world.*

(Thonga astronomy).

If Thonga do not bother much about the origin of heaven, and of its lights, what are their ideas concerning them?

Heaven (tilo, dji-ma) is for them an immense solid vault which

rests on the earth. The point where heaven touches the earth is called *bugimamusi*, a curious word of the bu-ma class, the prefix *bu* meaning a place, viz., the place where the women can lean their pestles against the vault, (whilst everywhere else pestles must be leant against a wall or a tree). This expression is sometimes further explained by the following words: "Lomu ba kandjaka na ba khisamile" — "Where women pound their mealies on their knees"; they cannot stand erect, or their pestles would strike against the vault! This vault rests on the earth, which is often called *libala*, viz., the great plain. On what is the earth itself resting? This question does not seem to trouble the Thonga mind and I never heard an answer to it. In this respect it may be said, in excuse for the African Natives, that the ancient Greeks, with all their cleverness, were not much in advance of them. Some people escape the difficulty by asserting that the earth is infinite, viz., that it is endlessly prolonged downwards and has no bottom. — In the next chapter we shall see that *Tilo*, heaven, for the Thonga, is not only the material firmament which rests on earth, but a spiritual principle which plays a considerable part in the religious conceptions of the tribe.

The *sun* (dambu, dji-ma) is never personified, nor worshipped. This word is perhaps related to Nyambe of the Ba-Rotse, Nzambi of the Vili, and a number of other similar words which are names of God. Does it proceed from the stem *umba* or *vumba*, to mould, to form? I do not know. At any rate, should there ever have been a time when the sun was regarded as a personal being, the notion has now entirely faded away. On the seashore, in the Makaneta district, according to Mboza, people believe that the sun emerges from the water. The reflection of light which remains on the sea, after the appearance of the sun, is considered as a kind of source of light from which the sun emerges and renews itself every morning: it is "cut out from the provision of fire", sticks to heaven, follows its course and *dies* in the West. To-morrow another sun will come out from the "provision", and so on. But other people make objections to this explanation and assert that the sun passes under the earth and comes back the following day: so there is only one sun-

to which theory the first retort that the earth having no bottom, the sun cannot pass under it!

The dawn is called *mpundju;* then comes *tlhabela sana*, the time when the rays of the sun (sana) are piercing; *hisa ka sana*, when they are burning; *nhlekanhi*, the middle of the sky, or *shitakataka*, the maximum point of the heat; then *ndjenga* (Dj.), or lihungu (Ro.), the afternoon, the time when the sun goes down (renga); *ku pela* or *ku hlwa*, when it reaches the horizon, and *mpimabayeni* (Dj.) the twilight, literally "the time when you do not easily recognize strangers coming to your village because it grows dark." These are the divisions of the day (siku). Then comes the night (busiku).

Eclipses do not seem to have ever much impressed the imagination of Thonga. At any rate, they never caused panics (Mboza). When warned that an eclipse will take place and seeing that, indeed, the sun or moon is "turning dark" (dji yentsa ntima), Natives are more struck with wonder at the supernatural knowledge of the White people, than with fear of the phenomenon itself.

I have already dealt with the notion of the *year*, (lembe, dji-ma), which is very vague; it begins at two different periods: that of tilling and that of harvesting the first fruits (I, p. 371, II, p. 20). Thonga do not make any difference between a solar and a lunar year, their knowledge of months being very imperfect, as we shall shortly see.

Before leaving the source of light, I may add that the *light* itself is called *ku bonekisa* (Ro.), or *ku bonakala* (Dj.), litt. that which makes to appear. Of course Natives have no explanation of it to give. *Colours* are very imperfectly perceived, at least if we must base our judgment on the vocabulary. *Ntima* means both black and dark blue. *Libungu* is carmine, red, purple, and also yellow. Yellow is not perceived as a distinct colour. *Psuka* is the tinge of dawn, and of the rising sun. *Nkushe*, which means sea-weed, is applied to the *blue* sky; *nkwalala* is grey, *lihlaza* (Ro.) is green, the green of grass in the spring, and the corresponding term in Djonga is *rilambyana*, that which makes dogs howl. Very green grass has this effect on Native dogs.

The *moon* (ñhweti (Dj.), hweti (Ro.) cl. yi-tin), has perhaps been personified in former times, as it bears the feminine suffix *eti*, which is also met with in *nyeleti* (star) and in the names of certain rivers. (I. p. 35). At the present time there is no trace of worship, or of mythological conceptions in connection with it. Natives see in its spots a woman carrying a shirundju basket or a bundle of sticks: but they do not attach to that image more importance than we do when we talk of the man in the moon.

I have described (I. p. 31) how the new moon is received with acclamations of joy : in the villages the first person who sees it shouts: " Kengelekezeeee ", — " the Crescent ! the Crescent ! ", and this word passes on from one village to the other, and dancers rejoice because they will have moonlight to illuminate their feasts ! Such is, at least, the reason actually given by the Ronga for this custom. There were perhaps other ideas connected with the new moon in former times. — According to a Nkuna informant the day of the new moon is a *shimusi*, a day of rest. It is taboo to till the fields and cut the roots of the trees with a hoe. The moon must be left to become firm (tiyela). It is still tender as a new born child. Destroying winds might blow and hail fall if this taboo were transgressed. — The appearance of the crescent was also carefully examined, says the same informant. If its horns were turned towards the earth, this showed that there was nothing to fear, all the dangers contained in this month had been poured out: "mafumo ma hangalakile" — "the assagais were dispersed". On the contrary, if the horns were turned towards heaven, this showed that the moon was full of weapons and misfortunes. — The new moon is of great importance in the customs connected with exorcism and possessions, as every exorcist must undergo the *haza* purification at each new moon (Chapter III). Moreover Thonga, like many civilised people, also believe that some persons at this time have an attack of madness which is called *rihuhe ra ñhweti*, the lunar madness.

When the first quarter appears the moon is said to *thwaza*, a Zulu word which corresponds to *tjhama* in Thonga, and

is very much used in the terminology of possessions. Eight days later, it is said to *basa*, to be white or brilliant; full moon is said to *sima* or to *lata batjongwana*, to put the little children to bed, because when it rises, it finds them already sleeping on their mats. The wane is called *ku shwela dambo:* the moon is then found by the rising sun to be still in the sky, not having yet dipped below the horizon. When, at last, it disappears, it is *munyama*, the obscurity; the moon is said *to fa*, to have died. Is this meant figuratively, as is often the case with the word ku fa, or do the Thonga really think that each moon dies and is replaced by a new moon? It is difficult to say; most of them believe in a real destruction and a new creation of the moon each month (Timotheo), and this would explain why they have the same word for moon and month; they evidently identify the two notions. However some told me they believed it was the same celestial body which appeared anew each month.

Spoon, who is endowed with a very vivid imagination, believed that the sun and the moon have a race each month : the moon, when it first appears is not yet firm (a yi si tiyela), like a new born child ; so its light is feeble ; it is dominated by the sun ; but it grows and fights. When it is full, the sun sees " that now it is the moon ! " : it is something to be rekoned with ! During the second half of the month, as it decreases, it delays in the sky and the sun soon overtakes it again and compels it to pass behind. Then the moon is entirely vanquished ! How far these were Spoon's personal explanations or the generally adopted conceptions, I could not say. The term *shwela*, applied to the last quarter and meaning : " to be surprised in the morning" (See Ch. III), seems to convey a similar idea, and it is probable that Spoon rightly interpreted the ancient ideas of the tribe.

Each moon, being new, bears a special name. These names of the months, or moons, are now almost completely forgotten, at least in the Southern clans. This is curious indeed, when we think of the custom of presenting little children to the moon and telling them the name of their month (I. p. 51). This rite ought to have prevented those names from becoming obso-

lete. In the Northern clans they have been better preserved, and it has been possible for one of my colleagues, the Rev. H. Berthoud, to identify them more or less. His attempt to revive the nomenclature so that it should be used by civilised Natives did not, however, succeed any better than the attempt of the Scientists of the French Revolution. Amongst the Ba-Ronga those which are still known are : *Nhlangula*, the month in which the flowers are swept (hlangula) from the trees, probably October, when all the minkuhlu, minkanye, etc., blossom ; *Ñwendjambala*, the month in which the antelope mhala, brings forth its young (November?); *Mawuwana*, when the *tihuhlu* (p. 18) are plucked, because the people shout : " Wuwana ! wuwana ! " in their joy at having plenty of almonds to suck. It corresponds to December. *Hukuri* is said to be the month when the fruits of the *nkwakwa* (p. 17) are ripe. (December also?), *Ndjati*, or *ndjata*, viz., I am coming. It is the time of *nwebo*, when everyone is in his fields eating the new cobs of mealies, and if you call a person he will answer: " I come directly ! Have patience ! I am busy here ! " " This may be January or February. *Sunguti* is also one of the summer months. *Sibamesoko*, the moon which closes the paths, also called *Dwebindlela* or *Sibandlela*, is easy to identify: it is February, the time when the grass grows so high that it hides the paths leading to the nkanye trees. This is the end of the bukanye time (I. p. 369). *Nyenyana*, *Nywenywankulu* are the months of the birds (nyanyana), when one spends all the time in chasing the winged marauders from the fields of sorghum and millet (March. April). *Mudashini*, viz., what am I to eat ? is the month when you have harvested so many different kinds of food that you do not know which to choose : this is the time directly after harvest, May or June. *Khotabushika*, viz., when winter comes, probably June or July.

The *stars* are called *tinyeleti* (yin-tin) and play a remarkably small part in the ideas of the tribe. The modern theory, according to which all religions have started from the worship of stars, finds no confirmation at all in the South African Bantu tribes.

It is taboo to try to count the stars. When any one attempts to do so people will say to him: " Keep quiet or you will wet the hut during the night! " Counting stars represents the torments of the soul! If a child has been deprived of food as a punishment for an offence, his parents will tell him, when he goes to sleep: " Go and count the stars ", viz., " you will feel hungry and not be able to get to sleep; you will be as unhappy as if you had to count the stars ".

I never heard a distinction established between fixed stars and planets. They are all called tinyeleti. The best-known is Venus, which bears many names. Not knowing that the evening and morning star are one and the same, they have given it different names. The evening star is *Gumbashilalo*, the one which steals the evening meal, because it appears when people take it, or *khwekhweti*, the brilliant star, or *Nkata wa hweti*, the moon's husband (as both are often seen close together); the morning star is called *Ngongomela*, or *Khwezu*, and is greatly lauded as the herald of the day. It gives the warriors the signal for starting on a war-like expedition: the warriors can easily kill their enemies under cover of the darkness, and the sun will soon appear and help them to complete their victory. Travellers also start on their journey when they see it: the dawn will soon be there! Lightened with its light, candidates of the circumcision leave the village of the chief to go to the house of initiation. According to one of my informants (I. p. 74) there is a deep and mystic idea in this custom: Ngongomela announces the day; so little boys must be conducted by the morning star when they abandon their childhood and all its ignorance to enter the adult life with all its knowledge. It leads them from darkness into the light! So Venus plays a great part in Thonga customs. It is the great star. Notice the feminine suffix *eti* in one of its names. It may have been personified in former times.

The *Pleiades* are the only constellation which bears a name in Thonga. They call it *shirimelo*, the one which announces the tilling season, because, in fact, in the lands situated under the Tropic of Cancer, it rises in July or August, when tilling is resumed. I have not heard of any other constellation known

to the Natives. They have no notion whatever of constellations : their mind does not seem to have tried to group the stars, or to have seen figures of animals, or of objects, in the sky; their imagination in this domain is very poor, and they remain far behind the Oriental nations in this respect.

The falling stars are considered as a bad omen. When seeing one falling towards a certain point of the horizon, Natives think that a Chief must have died in the country towards which the star was directing its course, and they have a formula of incantation to get rid of the misfortune attending this phenomenon. They say : "Thu! Thu! nkulunkulu ndjuwee, famba psa ku u nga fa u ku bi". — "You great thing, go away alone (without me, leaving me behind) and die and disappear entirely". This is more an imprecation (shiruketelo) than an incantation. The syllabe *thu* means, and accompanies, the emission of a little saliva. It is different from the sacramental *tsu*, employed to invoke the spirits of the ancestors : it is an insult. It is spitting *at* something, not an act of respect and an offering as *tsu*. (1) This is the Ronga formula; the one used in Northern clans has the same meaning : " *Rura*, *rura weshe* " (Move, move alone !).

The *comets* greatly impress the imagination of the Thongas; they are called *shimusana*, or *nyeleti ya musana*, the star of dust, or *nyeleti ya nkila*, the star with a tail, and when they appear they also mean the death of a chief. People say : "See : a chief has died, but they have not yet published the mourning" (I. p. 387). The star which is said to have appeared the year of the death of Manukosi was probably a comet. (See Report of the S. A. A. A. S. 1905, Vol. III, p. 232).

These few superstitions and observations make up all the Astronomy of the Thonga. The sideeal world is almost entirely out of the range of their preoccupations.

(1) One spits at a child who emits a bad smell saying to him : " Thu ! u ya tinyela matjimba". — "Go away to ease yourself". Should you do so to a person older than yourself, he will say to you : " What ! you make *thu* to me (wa ndji thuka), you want me to ease myself ! "

III. *Cosmographic and Meteorological phenomena.*

1) The Wind.

The wind is called *moya*, an interesting word which means also spirit (the human breath and the spiritual part of man), and is applied to the acting, living agent, or to the smell, or taste, in some objects. For instance it is said of an alcoholic beverage which has lost its strength that its "moya" has gone. It is also the moya which gives the potency to medical charms.

Another word for wind is *mheho*. Strong winds are called *shidzedze*. When they break trees and damage the mealies they are attributed to baloyi, wizards, who fight during the night, quarelling over the cobs.

One frequently hears about *timheho ta mune*, the four winds. They are called: *Ñwalungu*, the North wind, (a curious word perhaps in relation with Balungu, the White men, see later on); *Nyingitimu* (Ro.), or *Djenga* (Dj.), the South wind; *Mupfanyaka*, the one coming from the plain of the black earth, the West Wind; *Mfenya*, the sea breeze, coming from the East. Sailors who are great connoisseurs in this domain still distinguish the South Westerly wind, which they call *Mfenyakulu*, the great Mfenya. In Shiluvane, the West wind, which sometimes blows with great violence, coming down from the mountains of the Transvaal Plateau, is called *Burwa*, place of habitation of the Ba-Rwa (bu, locative prefix indicating a country). (Compare I. p. 18). Two other terms of the bu-ma class, also applied to East and West in all the clans, are: *Busha*, the spot where the sun rises (ku sha), the East, and *Bupeladambu*, the spot where the sun sets, the West. So there is no doubt that the Thonga possess the idea of the four cardinal points.

2) Native Geography.

The geographical notions of the tribe are, on the other hand, very scanty. As a rule, they do not think they can know a

country, or a place, where they have not travelled. Every one must compile his own geography. Hunters, and men engaged in commercial journeys, had some knowledge of the Spelonken (Bvesha), of Pietermaritzburg (Umgungundhlovu), of Kimberley (Dayiman), and now every grown-up Thonga, so to speak, has been to Johannesburg (Nkamben). But the people who have always remained at home, women especially, show gross ignorance regarding their own country. I met some who were totally ignorant of the fact that the Nkomati River, which leaves the Transvaal at Komati Poort (a place known by all), was the same as the Nkomati which enters the sea near Morakwen, northwards of Lourenço Marques, at a distance of 60 miles from Komati Poort. It must be said, to excuse them, that in Morakwen the river is called Morako (locative Morakwen) and thus many people have never been aware of the identity of the two!

If you want to give Natives a grand idea of your knowledge, tell them the names of all the countries of Thongaland in their geographical order, as you may have learnt them in conversation, or by studying the map. They will be amazed and say: "What a wonderful traveller you are, knowing so many spots so far distant from each other!" The teaching of Geography in the schools tends, of course, to alter this state of things.

3) Earthquakes and Rainbow.

Earthquakes are not frequent in this part of the world; so they are rarely spoken of. However Thonga have a name for them, *shimbeti*. They do not give any explanation of them and believe they are perhaps caused by the gods. I remember having once heard a mysterious sound accompanied with a slight tremor of the soil. It was during the Boer war and I think it was caused by the blowing up of a bridge somewhere on the other side of the range. All the Natives covered their heads with their hands and seemed greatly impressed.

The *rainbow* is called *shikwangulatilo*, viz., the one which removes the danger from the sky. Notice the stem *kwangula*, to

inaugurate, which we have already met with, when dealing with pottery. The sky after rain is compared to a new pot, from which the *nkangu* must be removed. But this is nothing but an expression. No one can tell what the danger is that is thus taken away; it is probable that the tribe had more precise ideas on the subject in former times, and that these have become obsolete.

The two great phenomena which mostly impress South Africans are lightning and rain, and of these you hear wonderful and endless stories!

4) Lightning

is called *libati* (li-tin), and is said to be caused by a bird called *ndlati* (yi-tin). These two words, etymologically speaking, seem to be related to each other. They possess the feminine suffix *ti* which is met with under the forms *eti*, *ati*, *oti*. This bird is also called *nkuku wa tilo* amongst the Ba-Ronga, the cock o heaven, or *psele dja tilo*, the hen of heaven, and magicians know how to determine its sex when the bird has fallen.

The thunder is attributed either to the bird itself or, more frequently, to Heaven. The proper expression for: "It thunders" is: "Tilo dji djuma" — "Heaven roars."

In the Northern clans those who practise magical arts add many other particulars to the story, some of which may have been borrowed from the Pedi magicians who seem to possess a more complete explanation of the phenomenon. According to them, the *ndlati* (Pedi, *dali*) is a bird of four colours, green, red, black and white, which lives in the mountains, preferably at the confluence of rivers. The medicine-men of former times knew its hiding place and had even found the eggs of the bird in a nest floating on the water. When a thunderstorm breaks, the bird flies to heaven into the clouds; there may be scores of them, but one only will be dangerous (lebya) and cause death. It rushes down to the ground, strikes a tree on its way, tearing its bark and its wood, and throwing it down; or it falls on a hut and burns it, or on a man and kills him. Having reached

the soil, the bird can be caught, and I heard people seriously asserting that four of these, unable to fly away, had been found the previous year in Sikororo's country. Or the bird enters the ground, to a depth of two to three feet, and either remains there in its own form, or (this is the most common saying) deposits its urine (murundju), which had already caused the flash of lightning, and flies away back to the mountains; the magician who understands the "treatment of Heaven" comes and digs at the spot; there he finds a kind of gelatinous substance which solidifies after a little time. I possess a little of this curious drug given to me by a Pedi magician, by name, Mudjumi; it resembles a piece of chalk, and is considered very valuable on account of its rareness, and because it helps in the manufacture of the wonderful medicine of Heaven. Should a village have been struck by lightning, the magician of Heaven will come and dig out this foreign body; if he finds it, the taboo is removed. If he does not, the whole village must move to another place. In the same way, it is taboo to warm oneself at a fire made of the wood of a tree that has been struck by lightning, or to use it as fuel.

The flute of Heaven
Drawn by J. Wavre.

Happily this dreadful bird can be prevented from killing and burning by magical means. Both the Pedi Mudjumi and the Thonga Makasane possessed the enchanted flute, by which they could force Heaven — or the bird of Heaven — to spare them. Mudjumi having sold me his flute, I can describe it at leisure. It is made of a hollow bone five inches long, covered with Varan skin, filled at its larger extremity with a black substance like wax. Inside, to keep it clean, there is a vulture's feather. The bone is said to have been taken from the ndlati bird; the wax substance has been made

from powder obtained by drying up and pulverising a little of the heart, the eye, the bones, the feathers, and the flesh of the bird. In the wax are embedded three seeds of Abrus precatorius, the "lucky beans" well-known in South Africa, a round seed of a splendid coral colour with a black spot, very much used in Thonga magic. This addition of Abrus precatorius intensifies the sound of the flute and enables it to reach heaven. The magician seeing the thunderstorm approaching climbs up the hill, without any fear, blows in his flute: psee... psee... psee.., and shouts: «You! Heaven! go further, I have nothing against you! I do not fight against you!» He may add in a threatening tone: "If you are sent by my enemies against me, I will cut you open with this knife of mine." The thunderstorm will then pass away!

This invocation to Heaven is curious, and we shall better understand it when studying the part played by Heaven in Thonga religion. Here I merely consider the superstition as an attempt at explaining a natural phenomenon. And we may well ask: how is it possible that such absurdities are believed, and firmly believed, by men who are not at all devoid of a sense of observation? The idea that lightning is a bird comes perhaps from the fact that its movements in falling from above resemble the evolutions of a bird in the air. After all the phenomenon is so sudden that this explanation could easily be accepted by the imagination of the savage. As regards the affirmations about the coagulated urine of the bird, I must say I have been unable to understand on what they could be based, until I saw some samples of fulgurites found where lightning had struck the ground: the heat of the electric current vitrifies the sand, forming a kind of pipe, entering the soil, where it ramifies to a certain depth. These fulgurites, through not perfectly answering to the description given by Native magicians, may have been the natural substratum to which the Bantu imagination has added all the other superstitions.

5) The problem of rain and the way Thonga deal with it.

All over the earth the question of rainfall is of primary importance, but this is especially the case in Subtropical Africa, even

more than anywhere else. Rain may not fall during seven months, from April to October, and nobody worries about it. But if it fails in November and December, at the beginning of the rainy season, this is a dreadful misfortune, a calamity more serious than any other. The life of every individual, and consequently of the whole clan, is threatened. Famine will certainly follow, as cereals can only be sown during these two months and famine means not only suffering and anguish, but often death, in a primitive tribe which is totally ignorant of trade with out-lying countries, and does not possess any means of conveyance for food bought in other lands. No wonder therefore if the imagination of the South African Native has invented ways and means in order to regularise the rainfall, if rites, and charms, all the powers of magic have been resorted to with the view of ensuring the precious rain to the tribe at the right time.

These means can be classed in two categories : the rites which aim at removing the causes which are believed to prevent rain and the charms by which the rain is made to fall, irrespective of any cause preventing it.

a) *The causes which prevent rainfall and the rites by which they are removed*

The general intuition is that rain comes *from the gods* : "Psikwembu psi nisa mpfula" — "the spirits of the ancestors cause rain to fall." So, should the spring showers not come in due time, the first idea will be to offer a sacrifice to the ancestor gods, especially if the bones consulted have revealed that the anger of the gods is the real cause. Men will go to the sacred wood where the ancestors have been buried, sing there an ancient mourning song (I suppose N° 15, page 258, is used for the purpose), and some of them beat the graves with sticks. As regards the sacrifice, it consists of a black victim ; it may even be the offering of a living human being to the gods: these rites we shall describe later on.

Or it may be that a certain individual, *a wizard*, endowed

with magical power, or rather possessing enchanted drugs, prevents the rain from falling (a siba mpfula) through wickedness, or hatred of his countrymen. This is a rarer occurrence.

But the terrible calamity of drought is put in direct relation with some physiological phenomena which no one would have thought of in this connection: the miscarriage of women when the foetus has not been dealt with according to rule, the birth of twins, the death of children who were not yet aggregated to the tribe by the ceremony of *boha puri* (I. p.55) and who have not been buried in wet ground; these are the great natural causes which prevent the rain from falling! I have met with this conception all over the Thonga tribe. I found it also amongst the Pedi of the Transvaal who firmly believe it, and it would be most interesting to know if Suto, Zulus, and Hottentots have the same superstitions. Let me quote the *ipsissima verba* of Mankhelu, the great medicine-man of the Nkuna Court. I shall never forget the earnest tone of his voice, his deep conviction, when he was speaking to me in the following words, as a kind of revelation: "When a woman has had a miscarriage, when she has let her blood flow secretly and has burnt the abortive child in an unknown place, it is enough to make the burning winds blow, and to dry up all the land: the rain can no longer fall, because the country is no longer right (tiko a ra ha lulami). Rain fears that spot. It must stop at that very place and can go no further. This woman has been very guilty. She has spoilt the country of the chief, because she has hidden blood which had not yet properly united to make a human being. That blood is taboo! What she has done is taboo. It causes starvation."

"What then must be done? — The chief will collect his men and ask them: "Are you in a normal state"? (lit. are you right?). They answer: "Such and such a woman was pregnant but nobody knows what she has brought forth". This woman will be arrested and told to go and show us where she has put it. The earth is dug up; the hole is sprinkled with a decoction made of two drugs prepared in a special pot, the *mbendula* and *nyangale*; the woman herself must wash her body every day

with that medicine. Then a little of the earth taken from the hole will be scraped up and thrown into the river; water drawn from the river will be poured into the hole: the country will be well again, and then the rain will come".

"Moreover, we, the medicine-men, after having sent old women to the river to throw away that contaminated earth, we order them to make a ball of that earth, and to bring it back to us in the early morning. We grind it, we put it into a pot where it must remain for five days, and then we prepare the great drug to sprinkle the land. The medicine is put into horns of oxen and they go to all the drifts, to the boundaries of the country, on the borders of the Nwebeti and of the Thabina rivers, on the road to Sibila's country, to Diskop (Leydsdorp). They must not cross rivers: our neighbours do the same on their own side. One of the girls digs the earth, the others dip a stick into the horn and sprinkle the drug into the hole. We also sprinkle the road on which these women have trodden, when they had their blood; we remove the misfortune caused by these women on the roads. The country is pure again. Rain can fall."

This is the purifying rite in the Nkuna clan. Mankhelu asserts the Pedi do the same. He did not know if it existed amongst other Thonga clans. But Viguet described the same custom to me as being in force on the borders of the Limpopo, under the name of *mbelele*. The bones having revealed that the country is impure, the chief orders the mbelele: it is a period of mourning (nkosi) for the land. First the *phokolo*, or the sacrifice of the black victim is performed (See Part VI). Then the women assemble. They must remove all their clothing, only putting on some grass round their loins and, with a peculiar skipping step, singing a special song: "Mpfula nana" — "rain fall," —they go to all the spots where children prematurely born have been buried in dry ground, on the hills, take what they find in the broken pots and collect all that impurity in a secret place, so that children may see nothing of what they are doing. Water is poured on these graves in order to "quench them". On the evening of the same day they go and bury these impurities; this

is done in the mud, near the river. No man must approach during that work: women would have the right of striking the imprudent one and of asking him questions on the obscene formulae of circumcision; the man would answer them in the most impure words he could find, as all the language taboos are suspended on that day : nakedness even is no longer taboo, "because", says Viguet, "it is the law of the country!" Everybody consents to the suspension of the ordinary laws! (1).

Amongst the Ronga, I did not hear of any relation established between children prematurely born and the rain. When the mbelele rite is performed, a mother of twins must lead the procession of women who draw water and pour it on the graves of the twins in order to secure the rain. They also clean all the wells (kuha tinhlobo), digging them afresh and removing any filth in the water. It may be that the corpse of a twin, if it has been buried in dry ground, will be dug out of its grave and buried again near the river, or they will go in procession and pour water on the grave. This will act on Heaven which is killing the earth by the terrible heat of the sun. The burning October winds will cease and the rain will fall.

There is something mysterious about all these customs. Considered merely as ideas regarding Nature and natural phenomena, I believe their essential meaning is this: — there are some cases of human birth which are taboo. If any birth is taboo, owing to the lochia, those of children prematurely born are doubly dangerous. Abnormal children such as twins, children who have died before the "boha puri" rite, (I. p. 54), in some clans also children who cut their upper teeth first, partake in this nocuous character. They are a calamity for the whole land as they are in connection with the mysterious power of Heaven, and so they prevent the rain from falling. The great remedy for the evil, the only means of counteracting this in-

(1) This rite of mbelele shows striking analogies with the Passage rites which we have already often met with in Thonga customs. This is a special period, a mourning period for the land, says Viguet, a marginal period which, as such, is accompanied with obscene manifestations, both in speech and absence of clothing.

fluence, is to bury these children in wet ground. Should this not have been done, the chief must order these little corpses to be exhumed and buried near the river : this is the aim and object of the mbelele. If wet, these graves will cause no harm (1).

How did these extraordinary conceptions first originate ? Where is the connection between abnormal births of human beings and the rain-fall ? I think it can be found in the conception of Heaven which has inspired so many curious rites, and which I shall explain in the next chapter. So, it is possible that, after all, the mbelele rite has a religious idea at its base.

b) *Rain charms*

The removal of the corpses of abnormal children from dry ground and their burial near the river probably proves sometimes ineffective to produce the rain. So Bantu magicians have invented a great many charms to obtain the so greatly desired showers, and the power of the rain-makers is enormous. Our tribe does not seem to have developed this art so much as other tribes. The Suto-Pedi are masters in this domain and Mankhelu, who had been taught by them and had become a great and renowned rain-maker, has revealed all his secrets to me. He possessed the drug and used it frequently, said he, having often been called by Suto chiefs dwelling in far distant

(1) In the Maluleke clan, as previously mentioned, these three categories of children must be *cremated,* and foreigners dying in the midst of the clan are also burnt after their death, from fear that they may belong to one of these categories and so prevent the rain from falling, if they were buried in dry ground. The mbelele rite there is called *nkelenkele*. Rangane describes it as follows: — Women collect the bones of twins, children born dead, or who died at their birth; to these they add their old rags (perhaps the cloths used for their menses?); they bring all these impurities to the cross-ways and *burn them* there, singing impure songs, saying: "To-day is a great day ! There is no taboo any more ! If you prohibit anything, this will be an insult to the rain; it will not fall. " The smoke of all that they have burnt constitutes a religious offering: then the country will be pure and the rain will fall. The conception among the Maluleke is somewhat different from that of the Ronga.

districts, as far as Pretoria. He assured me he had met with so much success that these chiefs had given him oxen, horses, a waggon, precious beads, etc. ! Where had he found this marvellous drug ? At Rivimbi (in Pedi : Lebibi), a country northwards of Spelonken, not far from the Limpopo and to which he went, as far as I could make out, in 1865 or 1866. The Lebibi people are the descendants of Lebibi, a chief of the old times (as old as Nkuna, says Mankhelu) who, after his death, went to heaven and became king of heaven ; he still exists there as a spirit, hearing and knowing everything that is done on earth. This Lebibi is probably the same whom the Pedi call the first man, and about whom they have a number of traditions which I shall mention a little later. They all invoke him to obtain rain, asserts Mankhelu, even Modjadji, the great queen who has acquired such fame : she does not pretend to be superior to Lebibi; she owes her rain-making power to him ! His successors have kept the famous recipe for rain-making. Mankhelu visited them. He brought with him " bukosi ", viz., riches, and they gave him horns full of the drug. One of them is in my possession ; it seems to be the horn of a he-goat. These people manufacture this medicine for producing rain on an extensive scale. Baskets are seen in their huts, full of the ingredients of which it is composed. Strange to say these ingredients come all *from the sea ;* as far as I could identify them from Mankhelu's description they are : sea-urchins, (shinana sha mitwa), sea-weeds (pindja ra lwandle, lit. rope of the sea), bones of whales, or sea-fish, bivalve sea-shells, pieces of wood coming from wrecked vessels run aground, etc. All these are roasted and, when the process is sufficiently advanced, sea-water is poured on them to cool them (timula). They are then pulverised and " salted " with another drug called " shinyuke ", something black which I could not identify. The powder so obtained is put into the horns, half of which are dipped into sheep's fat and so become female drugs. Having been given the four horns, two male and two female, Mankhelu was told that these would retain their virtue for ever; when seing that their contents were near the end, he

could always prepare a fresh supply by roasting marine products, but he would have to grind a little of the original drug with the new powder in order to *pfusha*, viz., to raise its strength; according to the universal practice of Bantu medicine-men. The original drug is the well-spring (shihlobo). Should any one try to manufacture the drug himself, using exactly the same ingredients, he would meet with total failure, as the virtue of the drug derives from two sources: the produce of the sea, and the power of the first inventor, Lebibi.

Having come back with the precious charm, when summoned by any chief to act as rain-maker, Mankhelu employed it in the following way:

He first asked the chief to kill a black goat or sheep (a he-goat, or a ram, if the bones said so); the head, at any rate, had to be black. The heart was pierced with a puncheon and the blood flowed. He carefully washed the horns with the blood and smeared them later on (horola) with the "psanyi" found in the intestines of the animal. Then he took his *ntsiko*, viz., the two pieces of wood which acted as his flint and steel, poured a little of the powder into the notch of the female stick and made fire by the rapid friction described on p. 33. In the meantime Mankhelu was praying as follows: "Here are the drugs, Rivimbi of Tsome (Rivimbi's father)! give us rain." Then he invoked his own gods, saying: "Go to Rivimbi for me and come along here all of you to make the rain fall." This performance is a "mhamba", a means of calling the gods, especially Rivimbi, "the master of this mhamba." After a while the wood began to burn; leaves of the "nembe-nembe" bush (Cassia petersiana) were placed on it and a black smoke rose and ascended to heaven. Then the clouds appeared and soon the thunderstorm broke. A feather of the ndlati bird of lightning was put amongst the leaves as a protection against thunderbolts.

Mankhelu was absolutely convinced of the efficacy of this means of rain-making, and there seems to be more sense in this rite than in many others. To employ the sea to make rain fall is not so absurd after all! I could not assert that Natives have a clear idea of the formation of clouds, *mapapa*

(Dj.), *matlabi* (Ro.), and know that the water from above comes from the water below. At any rate they know that the sea is water and rain is also water. To obtain rain by a smoke rising from burning sea products is a procedure which is in keeping with one of the most common intuitions of primitive man, that like produces like, a belief which has found its expression in the famous principle of the old physicians: " Similia similibus curantur. "

When practising his rain-making art at home, Mankhelu proceeded with less ceremonial pomp. After having consulted his bones, he took four leaves of the tscheke plant (p. 14), smeared them with the magical powder and exposed them to the rays of the burning sun. As soon as those leaves were fully dessicated, "Heaven began to roar" and the rain came.

The great rain medicine is of Pedi or Venda origin. In addition to the sacrifice of the black victim and to the mbelele rite of purification of the land, which are characteristic Thonga customs, it seems that another old Thonga way of obtaining rain was the *tjeba fishing* which I described on p. 70. When the whole clan had gone to catch the barbels in the almost dried up ponds, a thunderstorm would come and rain would fall. This was especially the case with certain small lakes such as Malangotiba in Nondwane, and in Nsime near Morakwen, because battles had taken place on their borders and the enemies' corpses had been thrown into the water. So these lakes had become " great sacred woods " (ntimo). I suppose the spirits of the deceased, which were certainly " gods of bitterness ", (see next chapter), were supposed to prevent the rain, and the *tjeba* either appeased them or made them powerless.

To sum up this very complicated subject, I would say rain rites belong to three different categories : 1) The religious rites in relation with ancestor worship (black offering, visit to the sacred woods, old songs and sometimes offering of a human victim.) 2) Rites of purification of the land, those which derive from the mysterious relations established between the power of Heaven and abnormal births (mbelele, cleaning of wells by women accompanied by the mother of twins); these present

some features of the ordinary passage rites, either because the fall of rain inaugurates a new season, or because drought is a calamity comparable with death and attended with contamination. 3) The magic rites, in which the sea charms play the most important part.

Hail, shihangu (Dj.), mabyana, lit. little stones (Ro.), is frequent in Thongaland ; according to Mboza, it is not the object of any peculiar superstitions. Amongst the Pedi the day on which it has fallen must be kept as a sabbath. It is taboo to till the fields on that day.

IV. *The Inorganic World.*

Water is called *mati*, a noun of the bu-ma class, class of liquids, employed only in the plural form. Notice the suffix *ti*, which seems to show that, at a period when mythological conceptions were still alive, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Nwebeti. Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi*, *edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Nwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which reveals the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this was a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 320).

Crossing rivers is subject to a curious rule : — it is taboo to bathe in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he will first cross, then take his meal. This rule is still universally

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Suto origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalula, Olifant). Others begin with *nwa*, *ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

followed by waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case we might find a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be filled in a moment by a sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : so the traveller makes haste ; he will have time to stop on the other side ! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to give the victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI).

Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits, but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, as if there were a special spiritual being incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and they are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where those lakes are, should crocodiles threaten fishermen, (p. 72) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course and the more you search the better you identify these lake and river spirits with ancestor gods. In my investigations I found one case, however, where it seemed that a special spirit, a kind of Nature spirit is invoked. It is on the sea shore, in the Northern part of Nondwane, at a place called Mahilane, where there are two great rocks on the beach. When the great waves rush against them, with a fearful roar, people go and sacrifice (hahla) ; they pray thus : "Tsu ! Oh sea ! Let vessels wreck, and steamers also, and let their riches come to us and help us." In former times, a young girl was sometimes abandoned there as a prey, or an offering to the power of Mahilane. Now this is exactly what is done in the sacred woods for the ancestor gods and, in fact, Mboza asserts that : " When abandoning the girl, the officiant says : " You, Psikwembo, ancestor-gods, push the sea that it may wreck vessels. "

When urged to speak with more precision, my informant answered : " Mahilane and the sea are one and the same thing (ntshumu muñwe). When the sea is roaring people exclaim : ' Mahilane roars ' ! Near the island of Shefin, where two branches of the Nkomati river meet in the estuary people say :

'Makaneta roars.' Here it is Makaneta and no longer Mahilane."

This information is extremely interesting. As regards Makaneta, we know him perfectly well; he is the ancestor of Mboza and descendant of Mazwayi (I. p. 331). This ancestor god begins to be confused with a natural phenomenon happening in the country where he was living. The religious fear of the spirit of the deceased mingles with the awe inspired by the roaring of the sea to such an extent that both notions coincide in the imagination of the savage. We here note the exact point where *an ancestral spirit evolves into a Nature spirit*, and this instance proves, as clearly as possible, that the conception of the ancestor spirit has preceded that of the Nature spirit. Here, at any rate, Ancestrolatry is anterior to both Fetichism and Naturism. These later forms of the belief can be easily accounted for by the development of Ancestrolatry: the reverse process would be much more difficult to explain.

The *sea*, with its immensity and its wonderful power, deeply impresses the Thonga dwelling near it. They do not however tell many stories about it, nor did I hear of any explanation regarding its confines and the shore over yonder. Some magicians pretend to have gone and stayed for sometime down in the depths: to have "crossed the sea" is for them a kind of diploma, which gives them the right of exercising their art. (See Chapter III).

The *tide* (byaela) is considered as being caused by a whale (nkomu) which alternately swallows and vomits the sea-water: this is the common idea. However some Natives put it in connection with the moon, having noticed that the tide is higher at full moon and at the wane.

The sea must be feared: it is jealous. "When some one is taken away by the great wave, do not shout! Do not exclaim: 'He is lost!', else you will never see him again. On the contrary, if you say: 'All right, let him go', then the returning wave will bring him back." These are declarations of Spoon. And the old Makhani approved by nodding his head!

"It is the same with *fire*," also remarked Spoon. There was

a terrible bush fire in Rikatla on the 18th of September 1908. As always happens at the end of winter, the bush was absolutely dry. A leper woman, tilling her fields, wanted to cook a little manioc. The fire leapt to the weeds which she had gathered and from these to the bush. Two huts were burnt : — " It is their own fault ", said Spoon, " when the bush fire comes you must put it out quietly. If you make any noise, if you cry, it comes straight at you. That is what happened. In the first village people fought calmly and succeeded in saving their huts. At Jeck's village, they cried out. The fire leapt on a hut, the small hut of the son. The mother cried : ' Yo! yo ! Where shall I put my child ? ' She went on crying out until the hut was burnt to the ground. So the fire leapt on the big hut and burnt it. She has only herself to blame ! " (1)

The origin of *stones* is absolutely unkonwn. Pikinini, a Nkuna boy, who was endowed with an extraordinary imagination, once made me notice the stratification of a large dolomite boulder on which different concentric layers were visible, and he said to me : " You see ! Stones also grow ! " Another Native geologist, who had heard the European story of creation, coming from the Coast, a country of sand and sand only, and visiting the Drakensberg Mountains near Shiluvane, was amazed by the enormous cliffs of the Mamotswuri and gave vent to the following reflection : " No wonder we have no stones, in our sandy land. When God created the earth, he used them all in building these mountains ! "

Crystal greatly pleases the Natives. It is rare in South Africa. When magicians can secure a white or a black stone they generally carry it round the neck together with claws, or teeth, of wild animals, or with their little skin bags which they use as amulets. This is why I once had the good fortune to be able to exchange a crystal I had brought from Switzerland for one of these charms !

(1) Silence is always recommended to prevent misfortune : in the case of war (I. p. 445) women at home must keep silent ; the same when the husband is hunting hippopotami (p. 61), when a child is seized with convulsions owing to the power of *tilo* (heaven).

The *earth* (misaba) is also a great, great thing. First because it is identified with the people dwelling on it, with the clan. *Tiko*, the land, means both the soil and the people. More than this : the earth is the chief (I. p. 354) ; hence many laws : e g. the tusk of the elephant, which has fallen on the earth when the beast has been killed, belongs to the chief, etc. (I, p. 378). The most solemn oath is that which is taken with earth (ku funga u hahla hi misaba). Should a man be accused of stealing or being a wizard, if he puts a little earth in his mouth, says *tsu*, and declares : "I do not know anything about it", people who care for his safety will look for a medicine-man to treat him : it is a *mondjo* (an enchanted way of divination. See Chapter III). The same is done when an oath has been taken by sucking a piece of iron.

A curious superstition regarding earth is this : after having moved from one country to another, for some days you should mix with your food a little of the earth of the country which you have left ; this will provide the transition between the old and the new domicile (See I. p. 47).

Metals known by the tribe before the coming of the Whites were few. (See page 120). *Nhumbu* or *nsimbi*, iron, *nsuku*, copper, and *ntchopfa*, a name applied to all white metals (tin, silver, etc.) are the only Native names for metals. There is no word for gold.

V. *The Vegetable world. Thonga Botany.*

If Bantu possess a very limited knowledge of Astronomy, Geography, Mineralogy, etc., if their superstitions do not in any way deserve the name of Science, they are much more advanced as regards Plants. Here it is quite allowable to speak of a Science, a rudimentary Science, no doubt, but a true, precise knowledge which has been transmitted from past ages and which denotes a real power of observation.

The Delagoa flora is not very rich. I have succeeded in collecting between four and five hundred different kinds in her-

barium which I sent many years ago for classification to the Herbier Boissier in Geneva. In February 1893, before forwarding the second lot of exsiccata, I once gathered together some Natives of Rikatla in the hut which I had pompously styled a Museum and, having promised them 1/ each if they consented to remain till the end of the examination, I submitted the dried plants to them, asking them their names, their uses, etc. The result of the inquiry was marvellous. My areopagus did not seem to be a very choice one : an old woman, as dry as my exsiccata and smoking her pipe, another with ochreated hair, a young one, a baby on her shoulder, an elderly one-eyed man named Hamunde, my milkman. After them came the young chief Muzila, walking slowly, swinging the tails of his belt : this chief, notwithstanding his social rank, showed gross ignorance in botany; but some of the others knew the name of almost every plant; had I had a *nanga*, a medicine-man, amongst them, I am sure I would have obtained names for each specimen of the collection, for they are the great connoisseurs in this domain, their drugs being almost entirely obtained from the vegetable world.

A study of these names undoubtedly proves that Natives have the notion of the *genus*. This had been denied; it seems that, when naming animals, Bantu correctly distinguish species, but do not classify species into genera In Botany it is not so. Under the same name they unite forms which are sometimes widely different, but belong to the same genus. Here are some of these names :

Tsuna means fern and applies to the Acrostichum tenuifolium, which climbs on the palm trees in the marsh, as well as to the few other kinds of Filicea found in the district of Lourenço Marques; *gonhwa* is the name for Liliaceae, many kinds of which blossom in the spring : the Crinum Forbesii, with its big white and pink flower, and other kinds forming a bowl at the extremity of the stem; there are five kinds of Commelina in my collection which were called *Nkompfana*, either those with blue flowers, or the yellow one; a certain Papillionaceae genus, the Eriosema, is called *Rongole*. All these Strigae, a genus of the Scro-

phulariaceae family, are known under the name of *Shitshinyambita*, those which prevent the pot from boiling, as they are believed to have this effect when put into the fire. The Lobeliae are called *Shilawana*, etc.

The notion of the *genus* is so really present that Thonga distinguish various kinds in the same genus. So the tree called *Nkahlu*, an Apocynea, the Tabaernaemontana ventricosa, a precious tree whose sap is used as a styptic, and whose roots make a decoction for lung complaints, has a congener, found in the palm-tree marsh, the Voacanga Dregei, which is called *Nkahlu-tjobo*, nkahlu of the marsh. The two genera are very near each other.

Cognate kinds found in various regions are thus distinguished by the mention of their habitat, either the hill (ntlhaba), or the black earth (nyaka), or the forest (mutju). There is the *Muhlu wa ntlhaba*, of the hill, and *Muhlu-tjobo*, of the marsh (Secamone sp. tree of the Asclepiadaceae family). The case is even more striking with the Hibiscus genus. Its name is *Ntjhesi* ; there are the Ntjhesi of the hill (Hibiscus surratensis, etc.), the Ntjhensi of the nyaka, another kind found in Morakwen in the black earth ; and there is the *shitjhesinyana sha ntlhaba*, double diminutive of ntjhesi, the Sida cordifolia, a nice little Malvacea, a near relative of the Hibiscus, very much used in treating children's complaints, a panacea for babies, as it cures their vomiting, headache, wounds and internal troubles !

I find the same correct connection established between two Anonaceae shrubs, the Artabotrys brachypetala, called *Ntiti*, and the Art. Monteiroae, called *Shintitane*, little Ntiti, same genus but a shrub of a very different appearance.

However there is, of course, no anatomical study at the base of this classification : so their ideas of genus are not always scientifically speaking, correct. They call *Phakama* any parasite of whatever form it may be, and have a superstitious fear of them, especially of the larger ones, growing on other trees, such as the nkanye and nkuhlu : " Phakama dja singita ! " (1)

(1) " The parasite stem *singita* ", i. e. is of bad omen. They do not say *yila*, is taboo, though some rules apply to it, similar to those concerning

Nkushe means sea-weed, either the true algae, as Lagarosiphon muscoides, or other plants growing in water and belonging to totally different families, such as Urticularia stellaris, found in the same locality. *Nkaka*, or *Nkakana*, is the little Cucumber already described (p. 14), whilst *Nkaka wa tjhobo* is a Convolvulus (Ipomea cairica). The *Shirimbyati*, one of the names most employed, designates first the Helichrysum parviflorum, a yellow Composita which covers the sandy dunes, and blossoms during the winter; but *Shirimbyati sha tjhune*, the male one, is Gnaphalium stenophyllum, and *Shirimbyati sha mutju*, the one of the forest, an Indigofera belonging to the Leguminosae family : these three plants have in common small hard leaves : hence the same name given to them, although they are by no means related botanically speaking. So shirimbyati corresponds to our word heath, which is applied to many evergreen under-shrubs.

The want of an enlightened botanical sense is further seen in the following fact : three different kinds of Vernonia, though belonging to the same genus, are called by different names, as if their relation had altogether not been perceived by the Thonga. The Vernonia cinerea is called *Ntshontshongori;* the V. Perotteti, *Nkukulashibuya* (the plant with which one sweeps the threshing floor); the V. Tigna, *Hlunguhlungu*.

Another case of one and the same name applied to plants of different families which have but an external resemblance is the following : the *Ndjiba* is a Leguminosa tree of great proportions, Apalatoa delagoensis (Schinz), and the *Shindjibana*, viz, the little Ndjiba, is a small shrub with leaves somewhat similar to those of the Ndjiba. Its scientific name is Synaptolepis Oliveriana and it belongs to the Thymeleaceae family.

No wonder the notion of genus, though existing, has not been always correctly and universally applied : Thonga have no idea of the anatomy of the plants : they never analysed a flower, and are totally ignorant of the presence of male and

the tree struck by lightning. One does not warm oneself at its fire; its wood is not employed to cook food, for fear that men may suffer from hydrocele.

female elements in it. They however know that these sexual differences exist. They have noticed, for instance, amongst the nkanye stems, which are a dioecious kind, that some are male and some female, and they carefully preserve some of the male stems in order to fecundate the female ones; but they believe that this fecundation takes place through the roots of the trees !

Thus, when the name of a plant can be explained, we see that, in naming it, *its external characters, or its uses*, have only been considered. For instance the beautiful yellow Sterculiacea, Melhania Forbesii, is called *Muhlwadambu*, Setting Sun, because its deep colour is similar to that of the sun when dipping below the horizon. A certain plant whose seeds make an explosion when crushed, is the *Buputwana*, because, " it says bu-bu-bu ". A climbing Composita with juicy stem is the *Kamele*, "the one which is pressed ", (kama) to express its juice, which is said to have medicinal value. An Euphorbiacea whose fruit is eaten by the partridges (Fluggea obovata) is the *Midyanhwari*, patridges food. Those named after their uses are, for instance, *Nkukulashibuye*, the one which sweeps the threshing floor (Vernonia Perotteti); *Nhlangulabatjongwana*, Hibiscus damarensis, the one employed to wipe little children when dirty ! (This plant is tomentous and answers well for the purpose); *Psekamafura*, a large tree (Casearia Junodi, Schinz), a tree whose fuel is particularly good for melting the mafureira fat (p. 18), etc.

The great use of the vegetable world is that it provides men with food and medicine. If plants bear names and have been carefully studied by the Bantu it is, in the first place, because they are useful in these two respects. We have already considered the Thonga vegetarian food (p. 9-20), and I shall devote some pages to the medical art in Chapter III.

In Appendix II I give a list of Thonga botanical names with their scientific equivalents. These plants have been identified by Dr Schinz, who published a flora of Delagoa Bay in the " Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier ", N° 10, 1900.

The conclusion of this study of Thonga names of plants is that the vegetable world has been the subject of a real and, in

a certain way, scientific observation on their part. Their botanical knowledge can be compared with that of our forefathers of two or three hundred years ago, before Botany became a real science, when plants were still named from their external characters, and studied as medical herbs; I may even state that this knowledge, though of an inferior character, is more general amongst Thonga than, for instance, amongst European peasantry; this fact showing that the powers of observation and of scientific study are not inferior to those of other more advanced races.

Do plants play a part in Thonga religion?

When travelling through the country, you may come across a tree round which a rag has been tied, evidently for some religious purpose. The first idea would be that this tree is worshipped, but this is by no means the case. The tree is probably the one which divinatory bones have singled out as the one around which the village should b ebuilt, and the offering of this rag is made to the spirits of the ancestors, exactly as it is done when the rag is placed near the grave, or at the door of the little hut built on it, in the case of possessed ones, (See I. p. 141 and later on Chapter III). The tree is only sacred on account of this association. I have sometimes called the *Nkanye* a sacred tree and Thonga call it the king of trees: but it is not so of itself, as if it had any Nature spirit dwelling in it; everybody can cut it without transgressing a taboo; it is venerated because it provides the tribe with the national beer, and because its branches are used as pillows for the dead and its twigs as *mbamba* in the funeral service (I. p. 138). The religious and social *luma*, to which the bukanyi is subject, is observed from fear of the ancestral spirits and not because the tree itself is in any way worshipped. In fact I never met with any worship offered to a plant as such.

VI. *The Animal World.*

Plants, *psimili or psa-kumila*, things which grow (ku mila), are distinguished from animals, called *psibandjana*, or *psibari*, which are said to *kula*, become great, and not *mila*.

The knowledge which Thonga have of animals is extensive. They give names to all the larger ones, especially, of course, to those which are eaten, but also to smaller, insignificant and useless ones.

The *Annelida* are called by the generic name of *tinyokana*, diminutive of *nyoka* (yin-tin), snake; the leeches, *ntjundju* (mu-mi); the lumbrics, *nshikwa* (yin-tin), either those living in the earth or parasites in the intestines of children.

Amongst *Myriapoda* the Julideae are called *Khongoloti* (dji-ma); the Millepedes, *Ndlandlalati* (yin-tin). When one of these has stung a Native, you will see him swallow a little earth, and a mouthful of water after it, to prevent swelling taking place. "The milleped will die at once and you will not suffer much, because you have been wiser than it (u mu yi rangelile butlha-rin)".

The same precaution is taken with Scorpions, *shiphame* (Dj.), *mubalane* (Ro.). Other Arachnida are the Spiders (*pume* (dji-ma), *ripe* (dji-ma), the Ticks (*shikalana*), and the Itch (*shi-nwayana*), which Thonga know but too well without being aware that it is caused by a microscopic animal. To this group pro-bably belongs the *maroda*, a parasite met with in the huts of Bilen and other remote parts of the country, and whose bite causes a real disease.

The *Insect world*, so richly represented in Tropical countries (1)

(1) See my publications on the Entomology of Delagoa Bay; I). *Coleoptera*, with the collaboration of Dr. Bugnion; II *Orthoptera*, by Dr.A. von Schulthess Rechberg; III. *Hemiptera* by Prof. Montandon in the "Bulletin de la Société vaudoise des Sciences Naturelles". XXV, p. 132-220; IV). *Lepidoptera*, « Bulle-tin de la Société Neuchâteloise des Sciences naturelles » Tome XXVII, p. 177-250.

is pretty well known, though many of its representatives are of no practical use to the Natives.

Orthoptera. Acridius peregrinus, the locust which ravages the fields, is called *humbi* (yin-tin) in Ronga and *ndjiya* (yin-tin) in Djonga. (See p. 65). The first "clouds" which appeared greatly impressed the Natives when they were seen at the beginning of the war of 1894. I heard some one say that this phenomenon had been foretold by a "mulungwana", a little man fallen from heaven to announce this calamity which was threatening the land. (See next chapter). Other Acridians are called *mhera* (yin-tin); the larvae of locusts, which abound at certain times in the gardens, are the *hondje* (yin-tin). The Pamphygus, fat, heavy, grey locust, the female apterous, are called *phuphu* (dji-ma). The Grillus is *Shiyendlwa* (shi- psi), and is eaten by some. But the best known Orthoptera are those of the Mantidae family whose representatives are numerous in the country. They are called *Ñwambyevu-mbyevu* (Dj.) or *Ñwambyevulane* (Ro.), viz., the one which cuts the hair, probably on account of its paws which move like scissors. This insect plays a great part in the superstitions of the Bushmen who worship it. Amongst the Thonga there is a similar custom: young shepherds when they meet with a Mantis, tear out a little hair from the skins of their belt and offer it to the insect saying: "Take, Grandfather!" They say that in old times they were considered as gods (psikwembu), or rather emissaries of the ancestor gods just the same as the little green snakes (Chapter II); their name was Mahulwahulwane, and when one of them entered a hut, no one interfered with it, as it was thought that perhaps some god had come to pay a visit to his descendants. These ideas regarding Mantidae seems to be disappearing now and the offering is but a little children's game. An other Orthoptera is the *Shipfalapfapfa*, an onomatopoeia, describing a flying locust, and the *Shishirikoko*, a large kind which emits saliva through its thorax. When it flies Thonga say to it: "Go to the place where people eat meat!"

Hemiptera. Bugs are well, too well, known in Thongaland, having taken up their abode in most of the huts, where they

are tolerated. They are called *Nsiketi* (yin-tin) and the wild bugs *Nsiketi ya nhoba*, bug of the bush. Lice, *Nhwala* (yin-tin), are considered as vermin, and often as the result of bewitchment, especially when seen swarming on children. Many Aphidae (grubs) cause an exudation on certain shrubs, a kind of wax, the *Mubodi*, which is used for the manufacture of the black crowns (I, p. 129) ; others are called *Shihungubungu*, the red ones, probably a kind of cochineal.

Neuroptera. Diptera. The equivalent of these names of flies is *Nhongana* (yin-tin). Mosquitoe are called *Busuna* and fleas *Butseka*, with the prefix *bu* which here means a collection, a great number. *Busokoti* a similar word designates the ants. The big gad-flies are the *Bawa* (dji-ma). The Libellulidae are called *Mungutane* (mu-ba) and the Termitideae *Muhlwa* (mu-mi).

Lepidoptera. Butterflies and moths are designated by a single word, *Phaphalati* (Dj. Notice the feminine suffix), or *Phaphatane* (Ro.) (dji-ma), and their caterpillars by the term *Hukwa* (yin-tin) or *Tomane* (dji-ma), this last word especially applying to the large Saturnidae caterpillars which are eaten by the Natives (p. 64). The relation between the caterpillar and the butterfly is not generally known; only once did I find a boy who knew that a certain white cocoon, used as an ornament in dances (p. 84) gave birth to the big green moth with long tails, the Queen Moth. The reason why butterflies, though plentiful in Thongaland, have so little attracted the attention of Natives is, no doubt, the fact that they do not in any way contribute to their food. I have told the story of a woman who tried to force a child to eat a butterfly. (I. p. 419).

Coleoptera. The general term for Coleoptera is *Shifufununu*, and it especially applies to the big Tenebrionidae (Psammodes Bertoloni), called *shifufununu sha aribar* (p. 67) and to the large black Carabidae of the Anthia genus which abound on the roads in spring; one of them marked with small depressions on the elytra is, for that reason, called the small pox shifufununu (sha nyedzane). Travelling once with a grown-up Thonga we saw a black Carabida which had four white spots

on the back. It was the charming Eccoptoptera mutilloides. I saw him trace a circle round it in the sand saying : " To-day I shall eat to my heart's content ! " — " Namunhla ndji ta shura ! " — What are you doing ? " I said. — " Oh ! this is the *Shurwa-shurwane* ", he answered. " When you meet it it is a sign that you will have plenty to eat ! " He was making a mistake ! The real shurwa-shurwane is the Mutilla, a kind of apterous wasp, which also has four white spots on the back, and the beetle we met was so similar to it that he mistook it for a Mutilla : is it not called mutilloides, pseudo-mutilla ? (1) — The Copridæ are called *Gadlen* (dji-ma) and these strange dung-eaters, which are extremely abundant in the country, are thought to be under the command of the wizards who can introduce them into your body to kill you. The pretty Cerambycidæ, with their long horns, are the *Ñwahomurikotjo* the ox of Rikotcho, or, according to a better etymology, the ox with horns bent backwards (kotjeka). Children sing an incantation before them, clapping their hands (I, p. 67). Their big white larvae, the *Shipungwana*, dig channels in the stems of nkanye, nkuhlu, mphesa, etc., and are readily eaten as well as the *Shimhukuta*, larva of a large Cantharis swarming in the stems of the palm trees of the marsh (p. 4). The *Shitambela*, a big Buprestida is roasted by the shepherds and eaten after they have torn off its elytra (I. p. 65).

Hymenoptera. Wasps are called *Mupfi* or *Mupfu* (mu-mi), and four different kinds are classified : the *Mupfu* proper (Belonogaster), the *Tlatlanhongana*, the *Bamaandlopfu*, a grey kind, and the *Mumpfundlopfu*, a large black kind which burrows in the soil. When somebody has been stung by a wasp, the others laugh at him. If he resents being made fun of, they say to him : " Be not angry ; we do this to help you ". They

(1) This custom reminds one of what Swiss children do when they send the ladybird to heaven, to ask God to give them fine weather to-morrow, or what they say when they pretend that crushing a golden Carabus on the road will make rain fall. Certain Coleoptera are of good omen everywhere ! Only, if in Europe they foretell fine weather, in Africa they announce a good meal. The difference is significant !

really try to divert his attention from the pain in order to comfort him. *Bees* are called *Nyoshi* (yin-tin) and are greatly appreciated for their honey (p. 43). Natives know the males (*djongwe*, dji-ma) the larvae (*shipungwu*), which they eat with as much pleasure as the honey itself. They call the honeycombs *habla* (dji-ma) or *shiblenga*, the wax, *mumpfu* (mu-mi) and the pollen brought by the bees, *nsindjo*. The curious *Mbonga* (yin-tin) *Bee* is worth special mention, owing to the superstitions which are held regarding it, and the part it plays in certain rites (I. p. 361). This species, which does not sting, digs a narrow passage of two or three feet deep in the soil and excavates a hole of one or two feet broad where it builds its round nest. Natives say nobody knows what the mbonga does with the earth which it digs out of the cavity in which it puts its nest. No heap of earth is ever seen in the vicinity. The hole is continued under the nest and has no end. It propably reaches subterranean pools where the insects go to drink, — as it is said that one has never seen a mbonga drinking from the lake, or the well, as do the other bees. Moreover the entrance to a mbonga nest is invisible to the majority of people. It is only certain families who can see it and consequently dig out the precious honey. For all these reasons the mbonga is surrounded with a certain mystery, and this is no doubt why its honey is used in the manufacture of the *nyokwekulu*. Its scientific name is Trigona togoensis, var. Junodi (Friese).

Amongst the *Mollusca*, a great many are eaten: *the Mbatsana* (yin-tin) of the sea (bivalve shells), *Likatla* (lin-tin) of the lakes, and the *Hwaru* (yi-tin), oysters of the Tembe shore. The land shells are called *Humba* (yi-tin) ; the big ones (Achatina Lamarkiana) are used as safes for the deposit of pounds sterling and are often buried in the huts ; hence the expression *Humba ya bupfundji*, shell of riches ! The smaller ones, resembling our snails (Aerope caffra), are rarer and it is considered a bad omen to meet with them on the road. — " Where you go you will hear cries of mourning ! " Their name is *Shikumbukwane*. The slugs are called *Holokompfa* (yin-tin) and the smaller shells *Shihumbanyana*, diminutive *humba*.

Fishes all have names, but having never dwelt in the close vicinity of the sea, I have not learnt them. I know the *Mfungwe* (yi-tin), the fish whose mouth ends in a saw, the *Mangapfi* (dji-ma), the name of a kind of hawk given to the flying fish of Delagoa Bay, the *Nhempfane* (yi-tin) found in the fresh water ponds, the *Ntima* (yi-tin) the barbel, the black fish which must not be eaten by lovers before their marriage (I, p. 167).

Amphibia. *Ntlambya* (mu-mi) is the ordinary frog (Rana oxy rhynca) whose young ones are known and called *Shilungula;* another black kind is the *Rebya* (dji-ma); the tree-frogs are called *Shilungwalungwana* (Rappia marmorata and argus); the toad *Kele* (dji-ma), Bufo regularis ; the famous Breviceps mossambicus is *Shinana* (I. p. 86) the great warrior of the tales.

Reptilia. There are many kinds of *Lizards*. The common kind found in the houses, under the verandas is, the Mabuia striata, the *Mponondjo* (mu-mi) ; the Lygodactylus capensis, found on the hills, is the *Nkolombya* (mu-mi); the little Agama aculeata, running on the sand, *Shipyindji* or *Shibonokamahlo*, the one which gazes at you ; the large gheko, Agama atricollis, with a head whose grey colour can change into blue, *Galagala* or *Phululu* (dji-ma) ; the grey one hiding itself in dark places, in hollow stems or under roofs is the *Hokokwana* (dji-ma), Hemidactylus grenatus; it is said that when this lizard sucks at the breast of a human being, it is impossible to remove it, and the only means of getting rid of it is to go and suckle a dog !

But the most curious lizard of these countries, the one which most strikes the Native imagination is the Chameleon (Chameleon Petersii), *Lumpfana* (dji-ma). Herd boys throw ground tobacco into its mouth to avenge themselves of the bad trick it played upon mankind when it delayed on the road and came too late to bring the message of eternal life (as we are just about to learn). It is used by certain magicians to discover thieves. They smear a chameleon with a drug which makes it turn white and they let it go : " Then the thief, where he is, also turns white, and if he does not confess his theft, he dies ! "

The flesh of all these lizards is not eaten, but that of the big Varan which lives near the rivers, *Kwahle* (dji-ma) is considered

a treat. The kwahle is said to be very hard to kill. About *Crocodiles (ngwenya,* yin-tin) all sorts of stories are told. When one of them has been killed, the contents of its stomach are carefully preserved : Thonga pretend that each year, when the rains begin, crocodiles swallow a stone, so that their age can be known by counting them. These stones are taboo : for a subject to swallow them is a cause of death, but one of them is chosen, treated with certain drugs and swallowed by the chief to warn him of his death as we have already seen (I, p. 365).

Tortoises, whose generic name is *Mfutju* (yin-tin), are eaten and used in the divinatory art, as we shall see. Some lake tortoises are called *Gamba* (dji-ma) and sea tortoises *Hasi* (dji-ma).

Snakes (nyoka, yin-tin) are generally dreaded and considered dangerous, although many kinds are quite harmless. The *Shipyahla* (Ro.), *Mhiri* (yin-tin, Dj.) is the big, lazy, grey puff-adder, creeping on the ground, one of the most venomous kinds, together with the *Mhamba* (yin-tin), a slender kind, very swift and often found on trees. " When you meet a mhiri ", say the Nkuna, " throw a little earth on it and you will soon see its brother! " Of course magicians have plenty of drugs to cure snake bites. For this purpose they use the head of the adder roasted and pulverised. *Shibatlankombe,* (Naja nigricollis), " the one which carves a spoon " is the name of a kind which inflects its neck till it looks like a spoon. The *Hhlaru* (yin-tin) is the boa. They eat it. Another member of the Clapidae family is the *Likure,* a pretty greyish violet kind (Causus Lichtensteinii). Amongst the harmless snakes are those little blue ones, *Shihundje* (Dendrophis subcarinatus), which are considered as emissaries of the ancestor spirits. I shall mention them again later on. The *Nsoma* (yin-tin), very common and harmless, is probably Dispholidus typus. Some small ones, not larger than worms, but hard and shining like metal, are called *Tumbi-tumbi,* because they hide (tumba) in the sand. One of them seems to be Xenocalamus bicolor.

There are also legendary snakes of the Thonga. On the Coast they speak of the *Buwumati,* which dwells in the lakes

and is invisible. One only hears it crying "bu-wu-bu-wu" when the rain is falling, and its voice is as loud as that of an antelope. Should it show itself to a traveller, it is a very bad sign. The story is told of a man who came back from consulting a bone-thrower. He saw the buwumati lying on the ground, its rings extending far away, closing all the passages. He retraced his steps, but after three days he died. In the Transvaal, this dreadful snake is called *Shimhemhemhe*, the name also being an imitation of its cry. This superstition is perhaps of Pedi origin, but it has been accepted by the Nkuna. The shimhemhemhe dwells in certain dark woody ravines on the slopes of the Drakensberg mountains. If anyone imprudently penetrates there, the snake pursues him, creeping along the branches above, and bites him on the top of the head. A man met with it once on the way to Thabina and saw it on the road, its head raised, a shining head of two colours. There was no end to its body. He tried to avoid it by making a long circuit; he reached home, but died because he had seen the snake which it is death to see!

Birds (Tinyanyana, yin-tin). Having made no regular collection of birds, I cannot here give the scientific names corresponding to vernacular ones. These are very numerous, and they are not always the same in the different clans. Here is the list which I made by questioning the pupils of my school who came from all parts of Thongaland : (1)

Palmipeda. *Sekwa* (dji-ma) duck. *Sekwanyari*, *Sekwambala*, *Shikukubi*,. (Mal. Kho.). *Nwafamben* (Mal. Nku). *Shiblakablaka*. *Lingubi* (Mal.). *Shiyankaken*, *Tukwana*. (Mpf. Bil.). *Ngululwana* (yin-tin), (Mpf.).

Long-legged birds. (Tinyanyana ta psikokoko). *Kukokwe* (Mpf. Bil. Mal.). *Munyangana*, *Nxantjangantjangana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Makhondjwawa*. *Gumba* (dji-ma), *Mavikwabembe*, *Tshebane* (Mal.). *Mugalandlopfu* (Mpf. Mal.); *Tshembyana* (Mal.). *Tjololwane* (Mal. Mpf.). *Yindwa*, *Randjane*, (Kho. Mal.). *Nxamahlanga* (Mpf.). *Mampfana*, or *Shisibaliendjo*.

(1) Abbrev. Mal. = Maluleke; Kho. = Khosen, Antioka; Nku. = Nkuna; Mpf. = Mpfumo; Bil. = Bilene; Spel. = Spelonken.

Gallinacea. *Huku*, domestic hen. *Nkuku* (mu-mi) cock. *Hwari* (yin-tin) partridge. *Mbangelane* (yin-tin), Guinea fowl. *Shiljatjatja* (Mpf. Nku.). *Nkungu* (Mpf.). *Matjyatjyana* (Nku.). *Teentana, or keenkana* (dji-ma), quail, (Mpf). *Nkwahla*. (Mpf. Kho.). *Hukumati*, (Mpf. Nku.). *Mangoko* (Mal.). *Makokwe*, or *Makwekwe* (Mpf.). *Hlokoyo* (Mal.). *Shibotshe* (Mal.). *Djyedjyedjye*, (Mal.). *Ndjendjenle* (Mal.). *Ndura*, (Nku.). *Ngukulukwana* (Nku.), or *Shitixitixi* (Mpf). *Nkulunkulu* (Mpf. Kho.) a splendid bird red, green and blue, called the bird of the chiefs, because chiefs used to adorn themselves with its feathers, is the Gallirex porphyreolophus.

Pigeons. *Tuba* (dji-ma), pigeon. *Shibambalana*, or *bombokonyi* (Mpf.); same as *Mbabawunyi* (Nku. Mal.). *Gororolwana* (Mpf.) corresponds to *Gugurwana* (Mal. Kho.). *Nyakungufe* (Mpf.) corresponds to *Kopolo*, or *Mangobolo* (Nku. Mal.). *Ngalane* or *Shidjuvapepe* (Mal.).

Sparrows. *Mbawulwane* (yin-tin), (Mpf.) or *Mbeulwane* (Kho. Nku.) swallow. *Psikidyana* (Spel. Mal.). *Tinhwana* (Mpf. Bil.). *Tinkata* (Kho.). *Nkapa* (mu-mi) (Mpf.) *Nsongwana*, (Mpf.). *Nhlekwana*, *Tshamatisa*, *Shindjengeletana* Mpf. Nku.). *Nadwangafolen* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Ñwamutjalatana* (mu-ba) (Mpf.). *Lidja djana*, (Spel. Mal.). *Tinhatana* (Mpf.). *Tinhelwa* (Mpf.). *Ngodzi* (Spel. Mal.). *Khwezu, Kololwana,* etc., *Sowa* (dji-ma), sparrow.

Creepers. *Gongondjwane*, lit. the one who knocks. *Shitjemahangala* (Mal.), *Munywane* (Mal.). *Ngobo* (Nku). *Hokwe*, *Ndhlazi*, *Nkoro*.

Rapaces. *Gama* (dji-ma). *Khoti* (dji-ma). *Shikolana*, *Mangapfi*, *Shimungu*, *Shihununu*, (Mpf.), or *Khukhunu* (Kho. Mal.). *Shikotlwane*, *Hwati*, *Fukwana* (dji-ma). *Manhengana*, etc.

Runners. *Yintjya* (yin-tin), ostrich.

Some birds are the objects of superstitious ideas. First, the mythical lightning bird whose story has been told p. 290. Then the Mampfana, the one who stops travellers (p. 128), and the Nhlalala. The *Nhlalala* is the honey-bird. It is a little sparrow of greyish colour. When a traveller crosses the uninhabitated country, it calls his attention by emitting short and repeated cries; it jumps from one branch to another and does not rest until it has

induced the traveller to follow it. It leads him to a hollow stem where bees have gathered honey. The fortunate wayfarer can eat to his heart's content and gives the bird the wax. If he wants to be shown a second tree, he only has to burn the wax : the nhlalala not having had its full share of the treat will lead him to another stem, hoping to have one more chance; there is so much honey in the second place that you will certainly leave some for your kind guide ! Such are some of the stories told by a boy called Pikinini about the honey-bird.

Mammalia My information, on the subject, is far from complete. One ought to join a Native hunting party, and hear the hunters tell their mighty deeds round the fire in the evening, if one wished to acquire all their knowledge and learn all their queer ideas about the beasts of the bush, which they have carefully observed, and regarding which a great number of stories are circulated. I will have to content myself with giving the name of some Mammalia and relating some superstitions about them.

Edentata : two kinds are known, the *Mpandjana* (yin-tin) the ant-bear, which is covered with hair, and the *Kwara* (dji-ma) which has scales. The only Cetacea known is the *Nkomu* (yin-tin) the whale.

Solipedes : *Mangwa* (yin-tin) means zebra and this term is sometimes applied to horses; this latter animal is called *Hanshi* (dji-ma), evidently a corruption of the English word. *Mpongolo* (yin-tin), donkey. *Mula* or *Mewula*, mule.

Pachyderma : *Ngulube* (yin-tin), wild boar and also, by extension, domesticated pig. *Mpfubu* (yin-tin), hippopotamus.

Ruminantia : *Homu* (yin-tin), ox. *Nyari* (yin-tin), buffalo. *Hamba* (yin-tin, Ro.). *Nyimpfu* (yin-tin, Dj.), sheep. *Mbuti* (yin-tin), goat. *Mbalambala* (yin-tin), sable antelope, Hippotragus niger. *Mbala* (yin-tin) (Zulu impala). *Mbuti* (yin-tin), duyker *Hongonyi* (yin-tin), gnu. *Mangulwe* (mu-ba). *Mbetlwa* (yin-tin) water buck. *Nhlangu* (yin-tin), reed buck. *Mbofu* (yin-tin), elan, *Nhutlwa* (yin-tin), giraffe, etc.

Proboscidea : *Ndlopfu* (yin-tin), elephant.

Rodentia : *Mpfundla* (mu-mi), hare, *Nhlolo* (yin-tin), rabbit.

Khondlo (dji-ma), mouse. *Vondo* (dji-ma), *Phephe* (dji-ma), *Ngole* (yin-tin) etc.

Insectivora : *Shitlulandlela*, mole, lit. the one which crosses the road ; it is a bad omen for a mole to cross your path. *Tjukunyana*, a brownish mole which burrows its passages just below the surface of the ground. Hence the fact that a bracelet made of its skin is employed as medicine against the Filaria, a parasite which makes its way under the skin !

Carnivora : *Nsimba* (yin-tin), civet cat. *Shipakana*, cat. Mbyana (yin-tin), dog. *Mbisi* (yin-tin), hyena. *Hlolwa, Nhlati* (mu-ba), fox. *Yingwe* (yin-tin), leopard. *Ndjau* (Ro), *nghala* (Dj.), lion, etc.

Chiroptera : *Tangadana* (dji-ma, Ro), *Mangadyana*, (mu-ba. Dj.), bat.

Primates : *Mfene* (yin-tin), baboon. *Habu* (yin-tin), monkey.

The monkeys are considered degenerate human beings, who lost the habit of working and of tilling fields, and thus fell into their present miserable condition.

The collection of Native names of animals which I have compiled is interesting ; first from the linguistic point of view, for purposes of comparison. Bantu philology needs such lists of words on which to base its conclusions. Let me point out that there seems to be a great uniformity in the various South African dialects as regards the names of big animals : the root being the same although the names have been differentiated by the regular phonetic permutations (1) ; on the contrary, names of trees vary very much, even from one Thonga clan to the other. But these names also interest us as throwing some light on the conceptions of the Bantu regarding Nature. The notion of *genus* is not so marked as amongst plants. It is, however, not absent. The different kinds of ducks are called *sekwa*, sekwa-nyari, sekwa-mhala, the word sekwa being a true genus name. We may even find the notion of *order* in the classification of mammalia made by Mankhelu when he said : "Wo-

(1) Compare the names of my list with the Zulu and Nyandja ones collected by Miss Werner in the *Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie*. Janv. Avril 1911.

men eat only flesh of animals having *hoofs*, and not that of animals having *paws*" (p. 67).

It is curious to inquire to which of the grammatical classes these names belong. Most of them are of the *yin-tin* class, the proper class of animals. Torrend has put the prefix *tin* in relation with the stem *psala*, to beget, to bring forth, and this may be correct. But many are of the *dji-ma* class, which often contains objects forming groups; animals roaming in companies, as well as the regiments of the army (mabotshu, mabandla, I. p. 431), frequently belong to this class. (Sekwa, duck; sowa, sparrow; khoti, vulture; hanshi, the horse of White people, of the cavalry, etc.). Some mammalia have the personal prefix *ba* for the plural. The mu-ba prefixes are always employed in tales when the animal is personified; however in the few cases here refered to, *ba* is used without any idea of personifying the animals; the bat, the fox and a kind of red antelope (mangulwe) are designated in this way, and I could really not give any reason for the fact. A few other names of animals begin with *bu*, the singular prefix on the bu-ma class which has evidently a collective meaning. *Busuna* is the immense number of mosquitoes which one hears buzzing in the night during the rainy season, whilst one mosquito is *nsuna*, pl. tinsuna; *busukoti*, is the crowd of ants swarming in the ants' nest, whilst *nsukoti*, (cl. yin-tin) is one ant, etc.

Thus, amongst the Bantu, the scientific knowledge of animals is still very primitive and may be compared to that which, for instance, the author of Leviticus possessed. On the other hand, for them, the animal world is not so far removed from man as it is with us. Man lives in close connection with the animals, not only when he hunts them and tries to transform himself into "a thing of the bush" (p. 57), but even in ordinary life, and he considers them as very similar to himself. For instance, some Thonga believe the animals have a *language*, and they try to speak to them. I have already mentioned Pikinini; he was a boy from the Bilen country who stayed with me for a time at Shiluvane, having left Bilene after the defeat of Gungunyana. As he was working one day together with some little Pedi boys,

I heard him talking volubly. Evidently he did not expect any answer from his helpers, who knew Thonga but imperfectly :

— " What are you saying ? " I asked him. — " Oh ! I am speaking to the cock. " — " What do you mean ? " — " I ask it if it knows what is going on in our country, at Gungunyana. It answers that it does. This cock is a clever cock. It is a man. When cocks do not know what one asks them, they say *hwi* (descriptive adverb meaning to keep quiet). — " Are there any other beasts to which one can talk ? " — " Certainly, those which belong to the village. " — "Dogs?"

Phot. A. Borel.

Gebuza whose nose was torn off by a hyena.

" No ! Pigeons ! When someone dies in the village, the headman must go and assemble all the pigeons, giving them some water or some food and he must tell them about the death. Then they begin to coo, they are satisfied to have been informed, treated like people of the home. Should this precaution be omitted, pigeons will leave the village in the afternoon and never return. (1) This happened to a Ngoni of Bilen ".

(1) A curious resemblance may be noted here. Amongst French Swiss peasants and in parts of England and of Germany, when the master of the

Enchanted animals can also speak, for instance a hyena which has been sent by a wizard. In Rikatla there was a man called Gebuza whose face was entirely disfigured; his nose had been torn off by a hyena and people told his story as follows: — Once a hyena entered the village in the early morning when every one was still asleep. It saluted the people saying:

— "Good morning, you people." — "Good morning" answered the people in the hut. — "Give me fire" added the hyena. — "Open the door and take an ember" they said. — "No, open it yourselves!"

Gebuza opened the door and the hyena seized him by the nose, with its teeth, and bit it off. This is one of the countless wizard stories. With the exception of these instances I do not think the Natives, as a rule, believe that animals have a language, nor that men can speak with them. However they do not feel themselves so far removed from the animal world as is the case amongst more civilised races.

Another point on which Thonga see a resemblance between man and the animal is this: they believe that both possess the *nuru* (I. p. 453. II p. 57-62). It is true that the nuru is only found in some animals: the elan, the ndakazi antelope, the elephant, the hippopotamus, etc. We shall have again to consider this superstition when dealing with Thonga Animism.

Is this idea of identity between man and the animal pushed so far as to believe that men can transform themselves into animals, and vice-versa? It is true that often in tales men are changed into hyenas, lions, etc. (See Dukuli, *Les Ba-Ronga*, p. 283 and many other similar stories). But these are purely fictitious. The theory is by no means generally accepted. In the ordinary course of life such transformations would not be considered possible. But they are certainly thoroughly credited in the domain of magic. Magicians pretend that they can fly in the air, with their axe, transform themselves into the lightning bird and so kill their enemy. But it is the wizards (baloyi)

farm dies the bees must be officially informed of the fact and some one goes to the bee hives and tells them what has happened: else misfortune will befall them.

who are considered as possessing this power par excellence, especially the faculty of changing human beings into beasts to make them work on their behalf. These ideas will be studied in Chapter III.

I have already mentioned the bird which " stops travellers " (p. 128) ; amongst Mammalia a certain Antelope is the object of the same superstitious fear. It is the little red *magulwe* (or *shipene*) whose astragalus bone is employed in divination under the name of malumbi (See Part VI. Letter D). — " When it crosses the road, in front of a travelling party ", says Mankhelu, "the leader of the company stops his comrades, goes forward, sits down alone at the spot where the antelope passed, and pours his magical powder in the footprints of the animal. Then he cries to his companions to come and follow him. Having walked for some time, he takes off all his clothing, lies down quite naked, as if he were dead. The others continue their march forward. After a while, he jumps to his feet and, making a circuit through the bush, he outruns them, without being noticed, and sits on the road, further on. They reach him and wonder how he came there : by this rite he has prevented the misfortune which the antelope would have caused to the travellers. "

B. CONCEPTIONS REGARDING MAN

I. *The origin of man.*

If the Thonga mind is very little puzzled by the question of the creation of heaven and earth, the origin of man preoccupies it more seriously. I must now enter into some details on the story of the origin which has been already mentioned (I. p. 21). It contains two parts : the creation of man and the cause of death.

1) The creation of man..

The first human beings came out from the *lihlanga*, the reed, say some, from the *nhlanga*, the marsh of reeds, say others. These two versions seem to answer to two different conceptions. The first is that one man and one woman suddenly came out from one reed which exploded (baleka) and there they were ! According to the second, men of different tribes emerged from a marsh of reeds, each tribe already having its peculiar costume, implements and customs. So when you ask about the origin of the iron hoes amongst the Venda, who possessed them before Thonga, you will be told : " The Venda emerged from the marsh of reeds holding them ". (1)

The first man and woman are called in the Northern clans *Gwambe and Dzabana*. No special story is told of these ancestors of mankind, but their names are still used under certain circumstances. When expelling a disease, in the *hondlola* rite, the medicine man says : " Go away to Gwambe and Dzabana ", an expression used coincidently with this : " Go away to Shiburi and Nkhabelane ", viz., to the extremity of the land, far away ; again, when many tales have been told and folks are going to sleep, those tales are also sent away back to Gwambe and Dzabana (p. 193). Why ? Perhaps because these are the old, old people, and the tales which are so ancient belong to them ? At any rate, by this kind of incantation story-tellers want to prevent the hearers' sleep being disturbed by the remembrance of the marvellous things they have been told. In the legends related to old migrations the " Road of Gwambe " (1) is mentioned. When the ancient people passed along it, the

(1) I believe the first version to be the true Thonga one. It may be that the idea that all the races came out of the marsh of reeds is an alteration of the primitive conception under Nyai influence. Ba-Nyai say that all men emerged from a big hole, the hole of Nyali or Nwari, in the earth, at a time when stones and rocks were still so soft that foot prints remained marked on them. It has been supposed that the myth of the reed was simply an allusion to a physiological phenomenon, but I do not believe it.

(1) What is the relation between this *Gwambe* and the name of *Magwamba* commonly given to the Thonga of Spelonken (I. p. 18) ? It is difficult to

earth was not yet solid, so they left the print of their feet, of their mortars, etc., in the rocks, where they are still to be seen on the border of a river called Hlantsabuhlalu. (Nyai idea? I. p. 21).

In the Ronga clans, these two ancestors of mankind are called *Likala humba* and *Nsilambowa*. The first name means : the one who brought a glowing cinder in a shell, viz., the originator of fire, (Compare the Hlengwe tradition, I. p. 23). Nsilambowa, the name of the woman, means the one who grinds vegetables. The first human beings, according to these names, would have been those who introduced fire and the culinary art into the world ! This idea is interesting and seems to show that, for the Native mind, the cooking of food is the pursuit which differentiates man from the animals !

In the clans of Maluleke and of Spelonken there is a third tradition relating to the first man, but it has certainly been borrowed from the Venda or Pedi tribes. They say the first man was *Ribimbi* and his son *Khudjana* (name transformed into Hobyana according to Thonga phonetics). Thonga only say that Hobyana is the creator of Heaven and Earth and the first ancestor of the race. But Venda and Pedi have a number of traditions about these two heroes (1).

say. According to some, there is still a clan descended from Gwambe, the first man, whose chief calls himself Gwambe. The Ba-Venda when they saw the Thonga merchants bringing their goods from Delagoa Bay or Inhambane, called them Makwapa, Balungwana bakwapen, the little white people from Kwapa or Gwamba country, viz., those who bring clothes. beads bought from the Whites. It seems certain that there exists a Gwamba clan somewhere in Gazaland, not far from the Chopi border. A story is told of this Gwamba chief who sent messengers to Modjadji to obtain rain from her. On their return they refused to cooperate in gathering fuel for their fire and died on the road. where their graves are still to be seen. Other informants give a totally different version of the origin of the term Magwamba: Gwambe was a chief dwelling on the border of the Oliphant. near the Dunduli villages; his men, on a travelling trip, said to the Venda : " We people of Gwambe even accept old women ", viz., if they receive us well, we call them our wives to please them ! Hence the name they were given. Other explanations might still be found and I think there is no real connection between Gwambe, the first man, and the Ma-Gwamba.

(1) Here is one of the most curious of these traditions, a strange story in-

2) The cause of death.

When the first human beings emerged from the marsh of reeds, the chief of this marsh sent the Chameleon (Lumpfana) to them, with this message: "Men will die but they will rise again". The Chameleon started walking slowly according to his habit. Then the big lizard with the blue head, the Galagala, was sent to tell men: "You shall die and rot". Galagala started with his swift gait and soon passed Lumpfana. He delivered his message, and when Lumpfana arrived with his errand, men told him: "You are too late. We have already accepted another message". This is why men are subject to death.

This myth is so strongly believed that shepherds, when they see a chameleon slowly climbing on a tree, begin to tease it, and, when it opens its mouth, throw a pinch of tobacco into it, and are greatly amused at seeing the poor thing change colour, passing from green to orange, and from orange to black, in

deed, when one thinks that these two personages are the great gods who created the universe! Once, in olden times, Khudjana planted a big pole in the earth, and passed spokes through it, right to the top. Ribimbi having climbed up, Khudjana took out the lower spokes and went home. His father being unable to get down, the son stole the food prepared for him and ate it at his ease. Then he again put the spokes in their places and the old man came home. But when he wanted to have his meal, he found nothing was left. His wife then gave him Khudjana's portion!

There is a great confusion amongst those traditions. According to Mankhelu this Ribimbi, or Levivi, is the same as the great rain-maker to whose descendants he went to obtain the rain medicine (p. 298). He is not only the creator of the earth, but the protector of all the men, who are his sons. So, when some one wishes to harm a man who is not guilty, the Venda say to him: "Do not kill Levivi's man". If you steal a partridge caught in a trap which was not set by you, they say: "Levivi, who stands on that tree, sees you". It seems that he is a superior being, a god (shikwembu), even the chief of gods, endowed with omnipresence and omniscience. Moreover there is a relation between Rivimbi and Nwali the Ba-Nyai god who is represented either as father, or son of Rivimbi, or identical with him. It may be that the Ribimbi tradition, which is both Pedi and Venda and seems to be essentially related to a first ancestor who has become the great god, has been mixed with the Nwali tradition, which is Nyai, so that ideas of different origins have been intermingled.

agony, to the great delight of the little boys: they thus avenge themselves on the chameleon ! (p. 316).

The same story is told amongst the Zulus, and other myths of a similar character are found all over Africa, especially amongst the Ba-Rotsi. (1) It would be an interesting study to collect them all, and thus to compile the African Genesis. One would probably find that the question of the origin of man and death are the two great subjects on which the imagination of the Bantu has tried to throw some light, and that, though the moral element is strangely deficient in these myths, yet there is a striking resemblance between them and the biblical story, where an answer to these same questions is given.

II. *The various human races.*

Have Bantu a clear idea of the human race ? What they call *banhu* in Thonga, *bantu* in Zulu, evidently means "Black people", the first inhabitants of the country... The Zulu are considered, owing to their military ability, as a superior race, not however to such an extent as they themselves believe they are ! See the matrimonial relations between clans (I. p. 240). Whatever may be their hostility or repugnance to their fellow black people, they know that they belong to the same species. I am not sure that they hold this idea regarding White people, who are not *banhu* but *balungu*.

What is the origin of this word ? As it is also used in Zulu (abelungo), the etymology proposed is the verb *ku lunga*, to be right, good. White people would be correct, nice people, for the Natives (2) However complimentary for us this explanation may be, I very much doubt its accuracy. Firstly, Black people have not generally such a good opinion of us. They

(1) Compare *Foi et Vie*. Oct. 1910. Les Origines. A. Jalla.

(2) Others say that their forefather named the White people balungu because they were *clean* (lunga having also that meaning). "They are always clean though they do not wash their body ! They have no dirt." But these explanations are not quite satisfactory.

admit our superiority in intelligence. They unhappily have not always noticed that White people behaved correctly in their dealings with them. Secondly, when we compare the word balungu with *Ñwalungu*, North, *balungwana*, inhabitants of Heaven, (see Chapter II), and with *Mulungu*, the great name of God in Central Africa, we are led to suppose that there may have been ancient mythological traditions, now forgotten, relating to White people, when they were not yet well known.

To account for the superiority of the White race, Mankhelu assured me he had heard the following story long ago, told by his grandfather in the village of Shiluvane, long before the arrival of the missionaries. Nwali having created the first man from whom both, Whites and Blacks descend, they were all naked. Gwambe slept with his sister, an act which had been forbidden, and she had a child. Since then children are born ; but this was not the intention of Nwali who wanted to create adult human beings only! The Gwambe (first ancestor) of White people showed respect to his father who was naked, whilst the Gwambe of the Blacks did not; hence the deterioration (onhakala) of the Blacks. " We have been fools and have been deprived of everything, and Nwali said : You Blacks, will wear down your nails to the end by digging the earth to find food ! " As already pointed out, Mankhelu had not the least trace of the critical sense. This is evidently the Biblical story very curiously transformed. However the idea of an original fault of the Black race in the beginning, having resulted in the inferior position it now occupies, is met with in many parts of Africa and is probably autochthonous amongst the Thonga.

" Balungu ba hlulwa hi lifu ntsena " has become a kind of proverb, quoted by Natives when seeing the marvels of civilisation and means : " White people are only overcome by death." I heard a little boy muttering it once when I was playing the harmonium.

Their notions regarding the several European races are very crude. Asking one of them once if he knew whence the Whites came, he told me: " The Portuguese came from the sea,

the Boers from the mountains. " — " And we, missionaries, who are neither Portuguese nor Boers ? " — " You come from Heaven ", he answered with a charming smile !

Pikinini, who knew how to converse with the cock, once told me what the Bilen people think of the Whites. It was just after the deportation of Gungunyana :

— " Gungunyana is dead. The Portuguese have eaten him !"

— " How is that ? "

— " Certainly ! The Portuguese eat human flesh. Every one knows it. They have no legs ; they are fishes (tinhlampfi). They have a tail instead of legs. They live in water ".

— " Then how do they manage to fight with you and to beat you if they are fishes and have no legs ? "

— " Ho ! Those who come to fight against us are the young men ; they have legs. They take us and put us all in a steamer which goes far away, far away. This steamer reaches a large rock which is surrounded by water on all sides. This is their country. We are taken out and placed on an island, whilst the soldiers go and fire shots to announce to the great White men-fishes that we have arrived. They choose one of us and make a little cut in his little finger to see if he is fat enough ; if not, he is put into a big basket full of ground-nuts which he must eat in order to become fat. If he is fat enough, they lay him in a big, elongated pot of the size of a man, and red hot. We know these particulars because a man, Ngomongomo, gave us the full explanation. He had been caught, but on the road his gods helped him ; he was covered with an eruption of pimples which was so disgusting that he was left in the island, and brought back here. He saw everything. We had first refused to believe that. Now we know that it is the truth ! "

Evidently Pikinini was in earnest and these absurd ideas were accepted as facts by the majority of his countrymen in Bilene. Is it not strange to notice that, whilst a great number of Europeans think of the Blacks as being all cannibals, these savages, on the other hand, believe exactly the same thing regarding us ! Of course a closer contact with White people has already led

them to a truer knowledge of what we really are, and they have discovered that, after all, there is not such a great difference between the various human races!

It seems that in former times the Thonga believed that the White people, not only the Portuguese, dwelt in water. They were said to have eyes in front and behind and to see on all sides, so that it was impossible to escape from them. They used to kidnap Black people and to take them away.

III. *The human body.*

1. Ideas of Anatomy.

The Thonga have never made an anatomic study of a human corpse. They have a riddle to this effect : " Ku pfura ndjilo mungema ? — Ba lahla munhu wa ku fa. " — " A fire of live coals ? — They bury a dead man ". As you never put your hand in the fire, so you would not touch a corpse. Nor have they ever made a post mortem examination ! What they know of the human body is entirely due to the inductions they have drawn from oxen, pigs and game which they cut open. Considering that the source of their knowledge is so indirect, one wonders that they have learnt so much of the human physical structure.

Having taught a little anatomy to the students of our Institute, I can bear testimony that they have names for most of the bones of the skeleton. *Pala* (dji-ma) means skull ; *lihlaya* (li-ti), maxillary bone ; *tinyo*, pl. menyo, teeth ; *tshuri* (djima), molar tooth (same word as mortar) ; *litlatla*, clavicle ; *likhongotlo*, spine ; *khatla* (dji-ma), shoulder blade ; *shintjintji*, sternum ; *shikangana*, extremity of the sternum ; *libambo*, rib ; (they believe there are *ten* ribs on each side !) ; *shikukwana*, humerus ; *nkono* (mu-mi), cubitus ; *ñwalihlanya*, (mu-ba) femur ; *libandja*, tibia ; they seem to ignore the radius and the peroneus ; *guywa-guywana*, rotula ; *nhlolo*, astragalus ; other bones are called by the name

of the region, or the organ, to which they belong: the bone of pelvis, *nyongwe* (yin-tin), the hip; the wrist bones, *hlakala*; those of the palm, *shipapa*; those of the fingers, *litiho;* those of the toes *shikunwana*; those of the ankle, *shirendje*; of the sole, *nkondjo* (mu-mi); the thumb is called *khudju* (dji-ma), of and the big toe, *the great shikunwana*.

The different organs are also known: *byongwe* (bu-ma) (Dj.) *bongwe* (Ro.) is the brain; *tihlo*, pl. *mahlo*, the eye; *ndlebe* (yin-tin), the ear; *nhompfu* (yin-tin), the nose; *nomo*, pl. *milomo*, the lips and the mouth; *lidjimi*, the tongue; *nkolo* (mu-mi), the throat; they know that there are two pipes, one for the food, the other for the air, but they are not sure which is in front and which behind! *Hahu* (dji-ma, Ro.), *phaphu* (Dj.), lungs; *shidyelo*, the stomach; *mbīlu* (yin-tin), the heart; *shibindji*, the liver; *libengo*, the spleen; *lipfalo*, the diaphragm; *rumbu* (dji-ma), the bowels, including the male internal genitalia; external genitalia of man and woman are taboo; *yinso* (yin-tin) means kidneys; *nhlonge* (yin-tin), skin; *nwala* (mu-mi) nail; *nsisi* (mu-mi), hair, etc.

But on pushing the inquiry somewhat further, we begin to notice a gross ignorance of important facts. The one word *nsiha* (mu-mi) means nerves, tendons, ligaments, veins and arteries; *nyimba* is the uterus, but also means pregnancy. Natives seem to think that a new nyimba is created at each pregnancy; they know nothing of the glands and I never found a name for the pancreas.

2) Physiological notions.

For this reason it is obvious that they cannot know what really happens in the body, and the marvellous and complicated system of our physical life. The mystery of the nervous system is entirely unknown, as is also the way in which blood (*ngati*, yin-tin) is formed by food, the digestive process, the circulation of the blood and the action of the air upon it, etc. We must not wonder at this ignorance: our forefathers,

three hundred years ago, were not much more advanced than the Natives are now.

On the other hand, Bantu, and especially Thonga, have a number of physiological notions, which are pure superstitions, being devoid of any scientific foundation, but are, however, firmly believed in and give rise to a number of practices, rites, and purifications. This is a most interesting subject and its study throws much light on the condition of primitive man. I have tried to explain these physiological conceptions in an article published in " La Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Mai 1910 ". It is not possible to enter into all the details here, and I am obliged to refer the reader to that article for more particulars. However my description of the Life of the Tribe would not be complete if this subject were entirely omitted ; so I will rapidly give a general idea of this curious Native physiology.

For the Thonga, human life is composed of a certain number of periods which follow each other, each having its particular character.

As we have seen in the Evolution of man (Part I), *the first period* (busahana) extends from the birth to the fall of the umbilical cord ; the baby is in a state of contamination owing to the lochia and must not be touched ; from the eighth or ninth day till the weaning takes place, it is *the nursing period*, divided into two or three sub-periods by the presentation to the moon and the tying of the cotton string. The child has been more and more aggregated to human society. Up to this day he has been considered as under treatment : because a child is not a complete healthy human being ; he is but *water* (mati), not yet firm ; he is always threatened with disease and so he must continually drink his *milombyana*. The *hondlola* ceremony closes this period and, by the weaning, he enters into the *childhood* period. (I, p. 56).

Infancy is a *bukhuna*, a state of incompleteness fraught with a certain defilement. Childhood is also a bukhuna, and this despicable inferiority must be removed by the circumcision rites, the significance of which is both physiological and social.

When wishing to marry, viz., *to pass from the class of unmarried to that of married people*, young men and women must again undergo a number of ceremonies of a social rather than of a physiological character.

But, in addition to these conceptions of human life which determine so many acts and customs, there are at least *five physiological phenomena* which are believed to be attended with defilement, and which call for special precautions, and rites : the menstrual flow, the lochia, disease, death and the birth of twins. To protect individuals, the family, or the clan, against these dangerous defilements, is one of the main preoccupations of any adult Thonga ; and to gain this end they submit to endless ceremonies of purification, they observe numberless taboos ; thus it is plain that these physiological conceptions, absolutely unscientific and wrong, play an immense part in their life and cause them any amount of unnecessary trouble.

I need not deal at length with these five physiologic facts so greatly dreaded. As regards menses, the subject has been treated in Vol. I, p. 187, 489. (Compare Vol. II, p. 49) ; as regards lochia, see Vol. I, p. 41, 60 ; concerning disease, we shall see more in our third chapter. The tremendous contaminating power of death has been shown in the explanation of funeral rites, and the birth of twins will be studied more closely in the next chapter. The importance of these facts in the system of taboos will also be explained in Chap. IV.

The sexual act, though not considered as attended with contamination to the same extent as the five other physiological facts just referred to, is however subject to some curious superstitions. Notice first, that, when indulged in before marriage, by boys and girls in their *gangisa*, it has quite another bearing than when accomplished by married people. In the first case it is deemed of no consequence, and has not the ritual value which it sometimes acquires in the state of marriage. The sexual act certainly places married people (la'ba khilaka, viz., those who have regular and lawful relations) in a peculiar position ; if it is not a state of actual defilement, it is at least attended with some danger to society. Patients, more parti-

cularly convalescents, must not tread on the same paths as married folk, or they must tie to their ankles a root of *sungi* as a protection against the emanation, or perspiration (nyuku) which married people may have left on the grass. For the same reason, a woman who has relations with her husband must not visit a sick person ; she must wait two days before entering the hut of a confined woman (I. p. 41). This is why certain acts in the ritual must be performed either by very young children, still unaware of sexual matters, or by old women having passed the childbearing time, and belonging consequently to the asexual class. See this rule in connection with pottery firing (p. 100), in the case of the hunter starting on his expedition (p. 56), in the *tjeba* of the Ba-Maluleke (p. 72), and in the mbelele (p. 295).

The numerous prohibitions forbidding sexual relations at certain times probably come from the same conceptions. As we saw, this act is taboo : during the menses (I. p. 187) ; absolutely after the birth till the tying of the cotton string, and relatively from this time to the weaning (I p. 55) ; in any case of serious disease taking place in the village (I. p. 133), or in time of epidemics (1) ; during the Great Mourning, and for those specially affected by death during a longer period ; it is also taboo during the moving of a village (I. p. 290) ; during certain hunting and fishing operations (p. 57 and 69) ; after having killed an enemy (I. p. 454) ; in certain religious ceremonies (Chapter II) : in a word, during all the marginal periods, those periods of transition, or of danger, when the life of the individuals or of the community is threatened.

On the other hand, by a curious contradiction, it is the sexual act, accomplished in the ritual way. s. n. i. (I. p. 488) and followed by a collective lustration, which removes the defilement and inaugurates a new period of normal life. Thus, though being more or less contaminative, it becomes the great puri-

(1) Mboza was so convinced that this was a rule of first importance that, having heard that White people make proclamations when an epidemic breaks out, he thought the object of the decree was to suspend sexual relations amongst the White community !

fying means in certain circumstances: for widows (I. p. 201); for the mourning community (I. p. 155); for the newly founded village (I. p. 290), etc. All these physiological ideas, though pure superstitions, denote however a deep and earnest conception of life, an aspiration towards purity which it is most interesting to note.

Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of the human body.

Spitting (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we saw (p. 287) It is especially prohibited in presence of people eating, and if any one spits, they will insult the culprit and say to him: "Eat your own shikohlolo"! — When some one expectorates, other people will cover the phlegm with sand, not on account of taboo, but from disgust.

Blood (ngati yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo because wizards might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), without being able to assert that this is a universal idea, I think that it is conceived as coming from outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass. When they enter a place which is close, Natives say: "There is sweat here". The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians also belch, to show the mysterious power hidden within them.

When any one *sneezes* it is the signal for addressing him with good wishes: "Butomi ni burongo!" — "Life and sleep!" The sneezer himself may begin to pray as follows: "Bupsayi! Buk-

wari ! (two liturgical words of invocation to the gods) I pray to you ! I have no anger against you ! Be with me, and let me sneeze ! Let me see sleep and let me see life ! so that I may go by the road, I may find an antelope (dead in the bush), I may take it on my shoulders ; or that I may go and kill " ndlopfu bukene " an elephant, (viz., meet with a girl and obtain her favour), etc. Now I say it is enough, you my nose ! "

Cutting the *hair* has been referred to already (I, p. 145, II. p. 83). In Tembe and Nondwane there is a curious superstition regarding hair : it is taboo to throw it away without precaution, otherwise a bird called *makhondjwana*, or *nwantshekuto*, might find it and put it in its nest, and your hair would not grow any more !

IV. *The human soul.*

Thonga have a quantity of names to designate the *psychic faculties* and they generally localise them in various organs of the body : *Patience* resides in the liver, and the identification is so complete that there is but one word to mean both the organ and the virtue : *shihindji ! Hatred* is in the spleen, and both are called *libengo* (from ku benga to hate). *Mbilu*, the heart, is the seat of *genius* and intellectual gifts. A man expert in certain arts and crafts has been taught by his heart. From the heart come the decisions of the will : a heathen cannot be converted to Christianity because his heart has not yet told him to become so (mbilu a yi si hlaya). To have a good heart means kindness, compassion. The chest, *shifuba* not the lungs, is the seat of intelligence and eloquence (as pectus in Latin). A dumb man is a man " whose chest is dead ". The diaphragm either *lipfalo*, sing., or *timpfalu*, plur., is the conscience : its contractions are identical with qualms of conscience. The head and the bowels do not seem to be the seat of any special faculty.

But although Natives localise the psychic faculties in the different organs, they certainly believe in an independent psy-

chic principle, in a *soul*. On this point, however, their ideas are most confused. They call it *moya*, the spirit, and in the Ronga clans, *hika*, the breath (the plural mahika, in the expression " ku ba ni mahika ", means to be out of breath). This is the vital principle of man and when some one is dying, his relatives sit near him " waiting for the departure of breath " (langusela ku suka ka hika). " The spirit has gone ", — " moya wu sukile ", they say when death has come. They have no theory as regards the way the breath goes out of the body, nor do they stop the nostrils or the mouth to prevent its escape.

A third name for soul is *ntjhuti* (mu-mi), or *shitjhuti* (Ro.), *ndjuti* (Dj.) *shadow*. It seems to apply more especially to the departed soul than to the psychic principle of the living man. I have been assured that one cannot dream of the shintjuti of any one still alive, but only if he is dead. The shadow, as such, is not subject to many taboos or superstitious fears. People do not fear to tread on the shadow of a chief for instance. It may even be questioned if they identify the material shadow with the shitjhuti, the spiritual part of man which separates from his body at death (1). At any rate many think that it is the shitjhuti which becomes shikwembu, the ancestor god.

In former times Thonga feared to look at their own reflection in a pool. They seem to have passed that stage now. The reason was perhaps that they thought their spiritual principle was identical with their image. This notion seems to be at the root of the fear they show of being photographed, as we shall see directly.

So we see that Thonga are not at all dogmatic on this sub-

(1) In the following story a direct relation is established between the real shadow and the vital principle. A Ronga magician, Shidzabalane, used to show his supernatural power in the following way : he slept on the ground and ordered a mortar to be placed on his chest and three women to pound mealies in it. This seemed to make no impression on him (a fact which can easily be explained if he was in a state of catalepsy). But one of these women suddenly thought that he had perhabs transmigrated into his shadow, so she hit the shadow with her pestle. The magician at once rose, crying out: he had really left his body and entered into his shadow !

ject. The soul is at the same time the breath, viz., something of the nature of the wind, the shadow, the image, the external likeness, or fashion of man as opposed to his flesh.

Whatever may be the original notion, they consider the human being as double and capable of unsheathing itself on certain occasions; their conception on this point may throw some more light on their ideas concerning the nature of the soul.

Some believe that the *unsheathing* always takes place during the night and that the soul comes back when its owner awakes : this is, par excellence, the case in regard to witches who unsheath by their magical power and bewitch people during the night, as we shall see. But, though the belief is not universal, some think all souls go away (or die) during sleep. I heard a boy earnestly praying one evening that his soul might come back to him next morning ! This is a kind of physiological normal unsheathing which is attended with no bad results. But the pathologic unsheathing also exists, and is very dangerous. It may be caused by the photograph of a man being taken. Ignorant Natives instinctively object to being photographed. They say : "These White people want to rob us (pepula) and take us with them, far away into lands which we do not know, and we shall remain only an incomplete being". When shown the magic lantern, you hear them pitying the men shown on the pictures, and saying : " This is the way they are ill-treating us when they take our photographs ! (1)"

But the great and dangerous parting of soul and body, which surely causes death, is that which wizards operate by their magic charms. We shall study these strange conceptions in Chapter III. They firmly believe that such is the result of witchcraft; so, when some one is dying, and the divinatory bones have revealed that the disease was caused by a certain *nevi* (witch or wizard), the magician shuts him in with the dying man in the

(1) The following reflection well illustrates the superstitious fear which Natives have for likenesses of dead people. Before the 1891 war broke out, I had gone to show the magic lantern in remote heathen villages, and people accused me having caused the disturbance by having brought to life again (pfusha) men who had died long ago.

hut and gives him the following command : "Bring back the spirit which you have taken and hidden somewhere." Some magicians, who are more powerful than the wizards, pretend to be able to find the stolen spirit and so to restore the patient to health. In cases of epilepsy, or of any psychic trouble attended with unconsciousness, when the sick person returns to his senses, they triumph : have they not brought back the soul? But they say this must be done in haste! No time must be lost!

Lastly, the definitive unsheathing of personality takes place at death. The body becomes rotten, but the shadow goes away and continues its life as a god, shikwembu. The belief in the continuation of life after death is universal, being at the base of the Ancestrolatry, which is the religion of the tribe. We shall study the ideas relating to the future life when dealing with the gods.

What Thonga can absolutely not understand is the resurrection of the body. "Mbuti yi fa, yi bola; homu yi fa, yi bola; munhu a fa, a bola"! — "The goat dies and rots, the ox dies and rots, man dies and rots!" answers the sceptical Thonga when he hears the story of resurrection.

On the whole their ideas of future life are not so very different from those of the ancient Greeks, who believed the human soul went after death to the realm of shadows.

Dreams are not generally liked by the Thongas. If something they happened to dream really takes place, it "disgusts" them (nyenyetsa). When a man has seen a woman several times in his dreams, especially if she were pregnant, he will consult the bones. If he dreams he has relations with her, he may go next day and hit her with a stick. He leaves the stick on the ground and goes away without a word. According to Mboza, this is done to get rid of the obsession, and to prevent the dream from passing to reality. This is the reason, I suppose, why a Christian boy once said to his missionary: "I am dreaming of many people, but I keep quiet!" Amongst Thonga dreams do not seem to play the great part which the animistic theory attributes to them in the formation of primitive beliefs.

Conclusion of Chapter I. Classification of Thonga Conceptions of Nature and Man.

During the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, the question of the various religions was discussed one day, in connection with the preaching of the missionary message. Speakers were frequently mentioning Animism in their discourses. In the gallery which was reserved for missionaries' wives, a lady wrote a few words on a slip of paper and forwarded it to a gentleman who happened to be sitting not far from her: — " Can you tell me what are animistic religions ? " was the question she asked. Unfortunately the answer given by the gentleman is unknown. I suppose he must have felt somewhat embarrassed... The lady was quite right in putting the question, as few people really understand what is meant by this term ! It is not so easy to improvise a thorough and adequate definition of its meaning on a slip of paper.

The South African tribes are considered as animistic in their beliefs. They belong to this section of mankind which is said to profess the animistic religion. But in what does their Animism consist ? Since Tylor first invented the word Animism and defined it " the belief in spiritual beings ", it has acquired a wonderful popularity, but it has been used so indiscriminately that its clearness has been very much impaired, and it has been necessary for modern Anthropology to restrict its meaning in order to maintain scientific precision.

Animism according to Prof. Marett (1) implies not merely the attribution of personality and will, but of " soul or spirit ". He calls *Animatism* conceptions according to which natural objects are endowed with personality and will only, and not with a distinct existence as spirits. As far as the power attributed to the natural objects is not clearly personified, but conceived as an energy, a virtue more or less independent, we have to deal with *Dynamism* and not Animism. To these distinctions I would add another one, which is essential. Speaking with savages, or semiprimitive men, you hear them sometimes expressing ideas, giving explanations which are purely *personal*, whilst others of their notions are *collective*. When wishing to ascertain the conceptions of a tribe as a whole, one must lay much more stress on

(1) The Threshold of Religion, p. 15.

the information of this last kind ; they are generally incorporated in rites and customs which every one accepts ; they are really *beliefs*, whilst those of the first category are but *ideas* born in the imagination of the savage.

Having drawn the broad lines of our classification let us now see how far the Thonga conceptions are animistic, animatic and dynamistic.

1) Individual ideas.

A certain year, the *mintjhopfa* trees (p. 19) did not bear fruit. A Rikatla boy, named Zinyao, took a stick and walked through the bush, belabouring all the ntjhopfa shrubs, scolding them because they had not done their duty. An ethnographer, anxious to penetrate into the mysteries of primitive souls, might infer from this fact that Thonga believe in the personality of trees, and that each tree possesses a spirit; this is absolutely false. Zinyao was doing the same thing as a little boy who hits the table against which he has knocked his head, or as a little girl who breaks her doll because she is angry with it. The same boy, who was evidently endowed with a strong animistic proclivity, once saw a big moth fall to the ground ; a hen at once ran towards it and devoured it. Zinyao watched very attentively, and I heard him muttering to himself : " The Son-of-Moth goes to the Son-of-Hen, yonder, and asks him to pay a fine, because, says he, I have been eaten by you there on the earth ". Should this reflection be taken in earnest, it would mean that, for the Thonga, each animal has a soul which continues to exist after death, and even that wrongs done to an animal during its earthly life, must be repaired in the after life. This conclusion would be absolutely erroneous. No one seriously believes in a continued existence of animals after death ; and, as regards a final judgment, there is no idea of it, even, as regards human beings who are believed to be immortal ! These are *personal ideas* of Zinyao.

I would put in the same category, the description of the fight between moon and sun, as given by Spoon. The same informant, another day, gave me another eloquent and graphic account of the battle of water near the lake of Rikatla, when the rain has been falling for many days : " In the hollow there is a marsh of papyrus which becomes filled with water ; at a quarter of an hour's distance the lake itself swells up; there is a canal which joins marsh and lake ; so the waters flow into that canal from both sides ; they meet in the middle and fight : but the water from the papyrus marsh comes with greater

force, and after a while it overcomes the other flow and goes triumphantly to the lake !" These individual ideas are either animatic (idea of trees, of sun and moon, of water, lightning), or animistic (Son-of-the-Moth). But they have not much importance. They belong to the same category as the description given by the Psalmist of the sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, or to that of Homer comparing the break of the day to a young damsel with rosy fingers. This is poetry, mere personification of natural objects, or forces, and not beliefs. The poetical tendency is very marked amongst primitive races. It may be that ideas of this kind were more firmly held in former times, if the tribe has really passed through a more mythological phase, a hypothesis which one has some reasons making.

2) Collective beliefs.

The beliefs of the Thonga, those which deserve to be called by that name because they are universal and express themselves in important rites, and customs, are the following :

1. The human soul continues its existence after death when it is endowed with new powers which make it awesome, and to be feared. *The spirits of the ancestors* are the main objects of religious worship. They form the principal category of spirits (psikwembu).

2. Although the spirits of the departed generally have nothing to do with people other than their descendants, some of them, especially *those belonging to foreign tribes*, can take possession of living men and cause troubles which must be cured by a process of exorcism. This is the second category of spirits.

3. Some individuals have the power of magically unsheathing themselves during the night, and their spirit goes out to torment, or to kill, and eat other people. These are *the wizards* (baloyi) ; this third category of spirits accomplishes its wicked deeds when separated from the body ; but their body is still living and they re-enter it. — These three beliefs are distinctly animistic.

4. There is in man, and in a few big animals, a semi-spiritual principle, the *nuru*, which escapes from the body when killed in war, or in hunting, and through which the dead man, or animal, avenges himself or itself on the murderer (See I. p. 453 II. p. 57-62). What is the relation between the nuru and the shadow (sitjhuti) ? This is not stated. The nuru seems to be of a more material nature, as it can

enter a root, and it remains connected with the corpse and the bones of the person or animal killed. This category of spiritual enemies, probably invented under the burden of fear and remorse, has nothing to do with ordinary people, and only troubles those who have killed, rendering them, as is generally believed, insane. — The nuru belief seem to be a compromise between Animism and Dynamism.

5. There are in plants, animals, stones, hidden virtues which can be either useful or harmful to man. Medicine-men (tiñanga) possess a more or less esoteric knowledge of such, and magicians (bangoma), endowed with special powers, can acquire a control over these virtues and use them in medical art, or in magic. — This is true Dynamism.

6. Certain natural objects, such as the sea, the bush fire, are sometimes vaguely personified. — This is Animatism.

7. But over them all is Heaven, Tilo, which is considered sometimes as a real being, sometimes as an impersonal power, a number of mysterious superstitions finding their explanation in this strange and perhaps obsolete notion of Heaven. — This is more than Animatism and seems to be a vague theistic, even monotheistic, notion.

In the following chapters, the exact nature and influence of these various kinds of spirits will be studied, and I hope that the explanation of all the facts concerning them will throw more light on Thonga Animism and show that it is very different from the Animism of the Dutch Indies, for instance, where one speaks of thousands of spirits, of earth, air, water, mountains and trees.

CHAPTER II

RELIGION

About the end of the XVIIIth century, a Portuguese military commander visited the Bay, and, after having spent a year and eight months in the country, sent to the Prelate of Mozambique a very curious report of the cultivation, the trade and the state of civilisation of the land (p. 125). The following sentence is found in his report : — " All the inhabitants are Hottentots, and have no religion. " That he should have had erroneous notions about the distinction between Bantu and Hottentot tribes is but natural : the ethnology of South Africa was not yet known. But that, after such a long sojourn amongst the Natives, he should have declared that these people have no religion seems really strange ! I can, however, understand that error, and excuse it. Amongst Thonga there is no temple, no special day set apart for worship, no class of priests; in fact, nothing external to attract attention to their religion. Even if he had been present at any of the religious ceremonies, the visitor might very well have mistaken them for ordinary family gatherings, as he would not have noticed anything like religious awe in the offering of the sacrifice, stolen by the *batukulu* (I. p. 162), in the prayer cut short amidst laughter, or in the songs which were common ones, perhaps even of rather an obscene nature. Yet, notwithstanding all that, how real is the *Ancestrolatry*, the Religion of the Thonga, of, in fact, all the South African Bantus ! How frequent and manifold are its manifestations ! This is *the first, and the most perceptible set of their religious intuitions*, and any European, who has stayed in their villages, learnt their language, and tried to understand their customs, has had the opportunity of familiarizing himself with this religion.

But there is a *second set of religious intuitions*, less easy to perceive. In the quartz of the South African veldt miners, in their investigations, sometimes strike a reef : they crush the hard stone, wash it, apply to it certain chemical tests and find there is gold in the reef. This is similar to an experience which I once had when conversing with Thonga natives. Quite unexpectedly I heard them speaking about *Heaven*, not as a kind of impersonal being, but as a king, endowed with great powers and omniscience, who must be feared by thieves, because he knows them. Persevering in my inquiries, I discovered that second set of religious intuitions quite distinct from the first, viz., the *Deistic Conception of Heaven*. I intend now describing these two parts of the Thonga religious system. Later on we may discuss their relation. " System " is perhaps too great a word, for no Native philosopher or theologian has ever classified this somewhat confused mass of religious notions, and we must not expect anything logical and corporate. We may even meet with contradictions, conflicting statements... While trying to bring some order into the subject, I will endeavour to give a faithful and respectful explanation of Native ideas.

A. ANCESTROLATRY

I. *The Ancestor-Gods (Psikwembu).*

1) The name of the ancestor-gods.

Any man, who has departed this earthly life, becomes a *shikwembu*, a god. We shall show, later on, that to translate " shikwembu " by god (with a small " g ") is by no means incorrect. The word is indeed interesting, but unhappily no light is thrown on it by etymology. It belongs to the shi-psi class, the class of the instruments. Take the verb " famba " to walk ; put the prefix " shi" to it, and change the "a" into "o" and you thus obtain " shifambo " — " the thing with which one walks!" So Shikwembu would mean : "the thing with which one

kwemba ". Only this stem *kwemba* is never used, and nobody knows its meaning. There is another form, *nkwembu*, of the class mu-mi, very rarely used, and having the same meaning, and the word *bukwembu*, the abstract noun derived from the same root. Bukwembu is the " power, which creates life and death, which gives riches, or which makes poor ", says Viguet. In Pedi the ancestor-gods are called *badimo*, a word which seems to be related to *Xedimo* (above, in heaven). But I have heard this connection doubted. In Zulu the etymology of *indhlozi* and *itongo*, employed to designate the ancestor-gods, is also unknown, which is a pity, as it would have been interesting to see if the stem, from which they come, also means above. Is it not strange that in these three languages so cognate, the terms used for the spirits, about which they have exactly the same ideas, are absolutely without linguistic relation? In Suto, these spirits belong to the class " mu-ba ", the class of persons, which seems natural. In Zulu their two names are of the class yin-tin and dji-ma, respectively; in Thonga they belong to the shi-psi class. This unlikeness is indeed curious.

2) The Categories of Ancestor-Gods.

Since every human being becomes a shikwembu after death, they have consequently many categories. As regards little children, what is their fate? If they die in infancy no religious ceremony is performed over their grave, nor are any prayers offered to them. The twig rite (I. p. 142) only begins for children who have died at the age of puberty. Infants are, however, seen in the sacred woods amongst the adult gods. This is one of the points about which there is no very clear explanation; doubtless the matter did not seem worthy of an inquiry!

The two great categories of gods are *those of the family*, and *those of the country*, the latter being those of the reigning family. They do not differ as regards their nature. In national calamities those of the country are invoked, whilst, for purely family matters, those of the family are called upon.

Moreover, each family has two sets of gods, those *on the father's side* and *those on the mother's*, those of " kweru " and those of " bakokwana " (I. p. 254). They are equal in dignity. Both can be invoked, and the divinatory bones are always asked to which the offering must be made. It seems, however, as if the gods on the mother's side were more tender-hearted and more popular than those on the father's. The reason for this is, perhaps, that relations are easier with the family of the mother than with that of the father. It is also just possible that it is a relic of the matriarchal period, when the ancestors of the mother only were known, and consequently invoked. At any rate, the part played by batukulu nephews in the offerings shows that they are the true representatives of the gods, not of those of their father, but of their mother.

Two other categories of gods, which I have sometimes heard mentioned, are the *Gods of assagais* (psikwembu psa matlhari) and *the Gods of bitterness* (psa shiviti). The former are those who have been killed in battle ; the latter are those who have been drowned, killed by a wild beast, or who have committed suicide, or the pregnant woman, who has been buried without being cut open (I. p. 166). In most of these cases, as is evident, the corpse has not been buried with the due rites and ceremonies ; the deceased has not been properly cared for : hence his bitterness ; or, as in the case of the pregnant woman, something has been buried without having first breathed its last breath (I. p. 139). In the case of the suicide, the poor man who hanged himself was full of sadness : " The great bitterness is the rope, " said Mboza. In most of these cases nobody attended at the death ! These gods are therefore angry, and are the most to be feared.

The *Gods of the Bush, psikwembu psa nhoba,* are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers, who reach their home safely :

Shikwembu sha nhoba shi etlele !
Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
The god of the bush has remained asleep !
He has remained asleep, young girls !
Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed, who wander about in the bush, having not been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. How fortunate you are to escape their anger! For this reason one often says to a relative, who is starting out on a journey: "Go with your god", viz., the special ancestor-god, who can protect you against the dangers of the bush.

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

The ideas about these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some tell you that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa"); there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a grea many cattle. The place, where they live, seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise. But it seems, in contemplating the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, remains *in his grave*. Is not his grave his house (I, p. 136)? Does he not sit on his square, where his mats have been unrolled? Thus the life of the shikwembu, seems to be the exact continuation of his earthly existence. That such is the idea is proved by the two bones, which represent the gods in the set of divinatory bones: 1) the astragalus or the nail of an ant-bear, because ant-bears live in the earth, and come out only during the night; 2) the astragalus of an antelope, found in the stools of a hyena; the hyena ate the antelope, swallowed the bone, which came to light again; in the same way the gods have been buried in the ground, and they reveal themselves later on. (Compare Ch. III, D.) A third idea, more or less intermediate between the other two, is that the gods reside *in the sacred woods*, and there lead their family life under a human form, parents and children, even little children, who are carried on their mothers'shoulders. Mboza went so far as to say that they are indeed married and bring forth children, as children are seen on their mothers'backs. Here again, we see the life of the other world considered as the exact reproduction of this terrestrial existence.

4) The Sacred Woods.

These are vast almost impenetrable thickets, in which the ancient chiefs have been buried, and they are consequently called *ntimu*, cemeteries. Every clan owns one or more of these burying places. The ntimu is reserved for the men of the royal family, those who have been the owners of the land. They are buried in different sections of the forest, "according to their villages", in such a way that the wood represents separate cemeteries, corresponding to the villages of the living. No woman, no uterine nephew is buried in the official cemeteries.

These woods are taboo. It is prohibited to gather fuel there, to cut any tree, or to allow the bush fire to enter them. Should anyone have imprudently set on fire the grass in the neighbourhood, and be unable to arrest the blaze, should the fire so pass over the grave, he must provide a goat for sacrifice, in order to "extinguish" (timula) the sacred wood. All entry is strictly prohibited except to the guardian of the wood (mutameli wa ntimu), the priest, who is the descendant of the gods of the forest. He goes there from time to time, to offer the sacrifices. He penetrates into the dense foliage by a narrow path, hardly noticeable. I have often visited one of the most celebrated woods, that of Libombo, two miles east of the Rikatla station. The old Libombo chiefs were buried there, and Nkolele, the proprietor of the forest, was very proud of it. He pretended that Mahazule, the chief of Nondwane, belonging to the reigning family of Mazwaya, whose forefathers had conquered the land of Nondwane, feared the spot and, in order to avoid it, took a circuitous route to Lourenço-Marques, or, if forced to take that road, he stopped near the wood to pay his respects to the old chiefs buried there. I did not see anything remarkable in that wood. Forcing my way through the bushes, brambles, and creepers I at length came to a sort of tumulus, but very slightly raised, on which were to be seen some dried leaves of maize, the remains of offerings placed there sometime ago. The young man who acted as my guide — considerably

against his inclination, I fancy, turned away his face, with a terrified expression, when we came upon this grave. In another spot I found some other tombs. Snakes thrive, naturally, in these thickets, where they areun disturbed, but I did not see any on that day. No mausoleum has been built over any of these venerated sepulchres; a few pieces of old blackened pottery was all we saw: remnants of the jugs and plates belonging to the deceased, which were broken, on the spot, after his death.

The dread in which these sacred woods are held by the Natives, is certainly not due to any unusual objects they may have seen there. It is inculcated, and kept in mind, by the truly terrifying tales which are told concerning them. In low tones, and with frightened looks, these are related in the evening, and the feeling of awe is fed and maintained by these legends. I intend here narrating those I heard from various informants; these stories will illustrate the ideas, which the Natives have of their gods, better than any philosophical explanation. Those in connection with the Libombo wood are the most typical. I owe them to Spoon and the aged Nkoiele. I will begin with those which are of the most ancient origin, and whose legendary character is the most unmistakable.

One day a woman was passing close by the forest of Libombo: she plucked a sala (p. 16) from a tree and ate it, after which she went to till her garden. On another ocasion, just as she was cracking another sala against the trunk of a tree before eating it, she saw that the fruit, instead of having a stone inside, was filled with small vipers. She threw it away, but the vipers said to her: "Go on! eat away! haven't we seen you every day picking sala? And these sala are ours, and not yours. What shall we gods have to eat? Have we not made this tree to grow?" And she went home and died, because she had been cursed by the gods.

Another woman was passing by the forest on a rainy day, and saw a child, who had climbed a tree, and was eating berries. She approached the child and said: "Give me some of those berries!" The boy made no reply, so she began to pick some for herself. When she had picked enough, she said: "Are you going on picking berries in such a rain as this! Where is your mother?" He still remained silent.

She felt sorry for the child, thinking he was indeed to be pitied : — " Come ", said she, " and let me carry you on my back ". So she went up to the tree, and lifted down the child, and tied him on her back, with her shawl ; then, putting her conical basket on her head, she started for home ; on arriving at her hut, she saw that a fire had been lighted on account of the rain : — " Put on some more wood ", said she, " for the sake of this little one, whom I found on the road eating berries ". She untied the shawl, and tried to put the child on her hip, but he refused to be moved, and clung to her back, where he kept quite still. The folks said to the woman : " Put him down on the ground, so that he can go and warm himself near the embers ". He refused. Then they said to him : " Get down ! " But he still refused to move. Then the villagers said to the woman : " Didn't you pass by the Libombo forest ? " — " Yes ! I did ", she replied " and there I found this child gathering berries, and brought him along with me ". — " This is no child ! it is a god ! " they cried ; " a child never has a hard head like this one has. And look at his legs ! what strength ! However did you come to think it was a child ? " — " But ", said she, " I certainly thought it was a child — and can it be a god ? " — They sent for magicians, who threw the bones. At once the magicians knew what was wrong : — " Ha ! Hé ! you found him at Libombo, did you not ? " They tried to remove him by force, but he clung still more closely to the woman's back, stiffening his legs round her waist, and his arms around her neck. They tried to unclench his hands, but it was impossible ! Then they begged her to go back to Libombo, and implore the owners of the forest to set her free from this child. She took her basket, and returned to the tree, where she had found him. The guardian of the forest soon appeared. It was Makundju, the ancestor of Nkolele. He inveighed against the woman, and those who accompanied her, saying: — " When you find fruit in the forest, do not pick it ! If it be maize, leave it alone, or, if you pick it, spare at least one ear. If your chicken flies into the wood, do not go after it. If your goat runs away into it, you mus not follow it. We are worn out, we, folks of Libombo, with offering sacrifices for you passers-by... Your troubles are the consequences of the sins (psihono) you commit in this place ". A white hen was caught, and sacrificed on behalf of the woman. Emitting the " tsu " the priest said : " Behold our ox, by which we present our petition. Let this god leave her back. She did not do it on purpose. She thought it was a child ; she did not know it was a god. Which

way can people go henceforth if you, gods, put obstacles in the way ?" While this sacrifice was being offered, the being suddenly left her back, disappeared, and no one knew how, or whither he went. As for the woman, she trembled violently and died...

A man once defied the prohibition of cutting dry wood in the forest. Suddenly he was pelted from behind, with'kwakwa' and 'sala' fruits. It was the gods. He tried to fly, but was unable to find the path out of the thicket. He was lost, and tired of wandering about he let his bundle of faggots fall. Then the gods allowed him to find his way out again, but, when he found himself in the open, he perceived that he was carrying nothing, even his axe had been taken from him.

Sometimes the gods made themselves heard ; when they were especially happy they played on trumpets, sang and danced. Passers-by often tried to get a glimpse of them, but the noise ceased at once, and would commence again suddenly right behind the listeners. The people of the country know quite well whence this music comes, and, at Libombo, they can even report the song which is heard in this forest. It is a great pity that I was not able to obtain the music of this ode of the gods ! I can, however, give the words, which will probably be found to smack considerably of the earth, earthy ! —

With ground-nuts and onions, nté, nté, nté !
Make a good sauce in the pan !

However, here are one or two facts of quite recent occurrence, showing that the age of sacred wood miracles is not yet over, or that, at least, the religious awe still survives in some faithful hearts !

Spoon assured me that he saw on one occasion a whole herd of goats in the forest, while he was picking tihuhlu nuts. He ran to tell his grandfather, Nkolele, and to ask if he might appropriate them. Nkolele reproved him with bitter words : " Unhappy man ! don't dare to touch them ! They belong to the gods ! Don't even speak of them ! — It is taboo ! (psa yila) ".

The young folks of Libombo used to blaspheme in their hearts, saying : " There are no gods ". " But ", added Spoon, " we very soon saw

that there were some, when they killed one of us, named Mapfindlen. He was walking along the path, singing and jumping, when he trod on a snake, which he had not seen, and hurt it. During the night the gods came to him. He began to scratch himself all over his body. He saw them against the wall : they were like snakes, and they said : " Thou hast hurt us ! " No one else saw them. His mother tried to quiet him, but he shrieked, and said to her : " Leave me alone ! The gods are killing me because I trod on them ! Help ! " They threw the bones. The diviner said : " This comes from your household gods ! Has he not trodden on a snake ?" His parents procured an offering, and sacrificed to the gods, trying to propitiate them ; but the gods were angry and Mapfindlen died.

The following is the most recent of the stories. It was related to me by the hero himself, Nkolele, the aged priest of Libombo.

After the war of 1894-1895, the Portugese Authorities established a camp at Morakwen, and decided to build a town there. To do this it became necessary to widen the primitive pathway, which led to Lourenço Marques, and Natives had to cede trees and grass lands, to the extent of several metres on each side of the path ; then a fine road was built of some 20 kilometres in length. This road passed close by the sacred wood, as it had been decided to follow the line of the pathway, which skirted this wood for a distance of about half a mile. Amongst many other trees was one huge mahogany, under whose shade I have frequently passed, which sent out a low branch, right over the path, and it was necessary to cut off this branch ; the people living in the neighbourhood were intrusted with the job. "When they began the work", said Nkolele to me, on the 28th November, 1895, " I went to see what they were doing with the mahogany tree. As I was seated the gods came to me, saying : "What are you doing here ? You ought to have stayed at home". I fell backwards unconscious, and remained in that state for four days. I couldn't eat : they had closed my mouth. I could not speak ! My people picked me up and carried me home. My relatives and my children were all summoned : the villagers said : "Our medicine-man has left us ! He is dead !" Then my eldest son went to offer a sacrifice in the sacred wood. He let loose a fowl, which flew away and never returned ; he prayed : "Oh ! my ancestors ! Here is my ox. Do not slay my

father!" Then I got up. Ah! it was he, who saved me, Ngeleñwana, my eldest son! I looked around and said: "What have all these people come here for?" They were terror stricken. Then they told me that the gods of Libombo were angry with me. The gods said to me (doubtless by means of the bones): "Take an ox-cock" (meaning an ox, an animal for sacrifice, which might be a cock), "and go to your brother Shihubane. Let him give you a fowl. and go and sacrifice. Why did you go there? You ought to have stayed at home, and have sent your children". I did not go any more by the big road. I go by the path through the marshes, and never by the avenue made by the Whites. Now I can go that way, for I have sacrificed, and the gods have said: "He has asked our pardon by means of his gifts".

Is there not something significant and touching about this tale? Civilisation penetrates irresistibly, crushing everything in its way, and cutting remorselessly, perhaps unwittingly, through the edge of the sacred wood! And there, under the mahogany tree, the aged priest, the guardian of its traditions, swoons away and asks forgiveness for having been an involuntary witness of the sacrilege!

These stories are by no means restricted to the Libombo sacred wood. Similar tales are told of all the forests. Mboza says:

A woman was imprudent enough to cut some dry branches in the sacred wood of Masinge, near Morakwen. She at once heard an unusual voice: bi... bi.., and received blows. She ran away home leaving her garment in the bush. Having arrived home, she asked her husband to go and fetch it, but he refused, from fear. Nkomuza, the guardian of the forest, went to fetch it, but they had to reward him with a bottle of wine.

An older story about the same forest runs as follows: — In olden times the gods were frequently seen marching in file, going to draw water from the well. They had their own road. They were of short stature, the women carrying babies in the ntehe, but, strange to say, with the feet up and the heads downwards! A man, called Mishimhongo, built his village near to the forest. The gods, angry with him, entered his huts, while he was busy with all his people working in the fields. A little child only remained in the village,

whom the gods wrapped up in a mat, and hid him somewhere behind the huts. Then they went to the garden and shouted: "Mishimhongo! There are visitors in your village". The man looked to see who was calling him, but saw no one. He went home, and found the child had disappeared. In the evening the gods came and said to him: "Look behind the huts. But move at once; do not remain near our road! If you do so, we shall kill you and your child". The poor man needed no second warning!

Not far from this place, in the Nkanyen district, is the sacred wood of Tlhatlha. An enormous pot is said to have been placed there long ago, a marvellous pot which possesses the faculty of locomotion. It can move as far as that village yonder (half a mile). But though it may have arrived only yesterday at the spot where you see it, it is quite hidden in the grass and shrubs, as if it had been there for years! It takes its walk from one end of the graves to the other. It is taboo to touch it! When the Portuguese tried to establish a camp there, they heard strange noises during the night, drums, trumpets, etc. The Landi (Natives) said to them: "Take care! There are gods here". So they removed their camp to Morakwen. (Mboza).

The wood of Tembe, called Mudlomadlomana, is very celebrated. It is said that, in olden days, there was an anchor there, and before sacrificing the priest always used to lift it up, and let it fall to the ground, saying: "Shawan! (I salute thee) Tembe!". If the sacrifice was acceptable the sound of a trumpet: "bvé... bvé...", was heard, far away in the depths of the woods, but no form was ever seen. This anchor also possessed extraordinary powers. When the country was at war with its neighbours, and matters did not go well with Tembe, the anchor would move off by itself into the Matjolo district. This was the portent of some terrible catastrophe!

No one ever penetrated very far into the sacred wood of Tiyini, of the Matjolo clan, for it was said that any one doing so would be lost, and unable to find his way out. When the people of Matjolo were in need of rain, they took a young man of the country into the wood, and there abandoned him. The gods accepted their offering, and the young man, struck with paralysis was unable to follow in their retreat those who had led him to martyrdom! He saw them going away but remained behind to be devoured by the gods. The others hastened to sacrifice and returned home; they were forbidden to look behind

them. Once home they told how they had seen on the ground, in the wood, foot-prints of adults, and even of little ones who must have been old enough to crawl on their hands and knees! Often, they say, they brought back the rain with them!

According to all these stories, it is evident that, for the Thonga, the ancestor-gods dwell in the sacred woods, and lead a life there in the earth, and occasionally outside, very similar to the terrestial one. Mankhelu had, however, another idea, which is difficult to reconcile with this representation. On his forked magic pole he had a long shining grey branch of a climbing shrub called *ñwabola*. This has enormous thorns, which are supposed to have the power of "calling the precious things which are far away, and of gathering them in the hut : money, oxen, girls to marry, etc., and also the ancestor-gods : " When they pass through the country, coming from our old domicile, near the Limpopo, they are caught by the thorns, and settle here to bless us". This conception, that the gods fly through the air, is very rarely met with. I never heard it said that the gods were in heaven, notwithstanding the Suto term badimo, those who are above.

5. Relations between Ancestor-gods and their living descendants.

The apparitions of ancestor-gods in a human form in the sacred woods are not of frequent occurrence. The gods reveal themselves to their descendants by other and more common means : first, by their appearance *in the form of animals*, such as the Mantis (p. 312) or more often as little bluish green snakes called shihundje (p. 317). These charming harmless reptiles are frequently seen in the huts, creeping in the thatch or the roof, or along the reeds of the walls. Natives never touch them, thinking that they are some of their gods, who have come to pay them a visit. It is taboo to kill them. If a disease breaks out in the village the bones may reveal that some one in the hut has hurt the gods, and a sacrifice will be required

in order to appease them. They also appear in the form of the large green puff-adder (shiphyahla). (1)

Secondly, the ancestor-gods communicate with the living *in their dreams*. If some one dreams of one of his dead relatives, he is very much frightened, and consults the bones, in order to know exactly what the god desires of him (Viguet). If the apparition was painful, if the god had come as an enemy, fighting, the dreamer, when awake, will take some tobacco, or a small piece of cloth, and put it somewhere in the reeds of the wall, near the door, as an offering. Or possibly the god has ordered him to give him something to drink. He will then buy a bottle of ginor wine, and pour a little at the out door ; whatever remains he will drink with his companions.

But the great means by which the will of the gods is reveal-

(1) Describing to me a sacrifice, at which he officiated either in September or October 1895, the old priest Nkolele told me for a fact the following story, which I will now quote word for word :

" I myself went into the wood with the offering I had prepared for the gods, and then *it came out*. It was a snake ; it was the father of Makundju, the Master of the Forest, Mombo-wa-ndlopfu, Elephant's-Face. He came out and circled round all those present. The women rushed away terrified. But he had only come to thank us. He didn't come to bite us. He thanked us saying : " Thank you ! thank you ! So you are still there, my children ! You came to load me with presents, and to bring me fruit ! " 'Tis well ! " — He came to thank us for our chicken. Even if one kills only a chiken, he is quite content. For him, it has just the same value as an ox. It was an enormous viper, as thick as my leg, down there (he pointed to his ankle). It came close up to me, and kept quite still, never biting me. I looked at it. It said : " Thank you ! So you are still there, my grandson ! "

— " But ", said I to Nkolele, " what you are telling me, is it really fact, or just fancy ? "

— " Undoubted fact ! These are great truths ! After this I prayed, and said : " Thou, Mombo-wa-Ndlopfu, the Master of this land, thou who hast given it to thy son Makundju ; Makundju gave it to his son Hati ; Hati gave it to Makhumbi ; Madhumbi gave it to Kininì ; Kinini gave it to Mikabyana ; Mikabyana gave it to Mawatle... (" Mawatle gave it to me, his son " is here understood)... Look upon my offering. Is it not a beautiful one ? And here, am I, left all alone. If I had not brought this with me, who would have given you anything ? Is it not just so ? I ask of thee, my ancestor, I ask of thee all the trees ; the palm trees for building, the trunks which can be hollowed out for canoes ; and let it be that these trunks shall not fall on the people and crush them, when they go to cut them down, over there in the marsh. "

ed is the *set of divinatory bones*, which are cast on every occasion, and are called the "bula", the Word. Is it the Word of the gods? Not precisely, but in most cases the diviner thinks he owes his divinatory power to a dead relative, who used to cast lots himself, and who transmitted his spirit of interpretation to him. Whatever may be the real explanation, the fact remains that it is by means of the bones the Thonga believe they know what their gods think and wish, and this is the reason, as we shall see, why divination plays such an important part in their life. It is of the utmost importance to know what their gods think and do, as the very existence of the village, of the clan, and the welfare of every member of the clan depends on them. Is not Divinity "the power of killing or of making alive, of enriching or of making poor?" Natives firmly believe in these two opposite actions of their gods. They are the masters of everything: earth, fields, trees, rain, men, children, even of baloyi, wizards! They have a full control over all these objects or persons.

The gods can *bless*: if the trees bear plenty of fruit, it is because they made it grow (I. p. 387); if the crops are plentiful, it is because they sent good wizards to increase them, or hindered bad ones who tried to spoil them (I. p. 369); if you come across a pot of palm wine, it is your god who has sent you that windfall (p. 42). When Mboza escaped from the Morakwen battle, one of his relatives exclaimed on his return home: "The gods of Makaneta have still been with you!" (Psikwembu psa ka Makaneta psa ha ku yimelele). Often when a man has narrowly escaped drowning, or having his ankle sprained by a stump which has caught his foot, he will say "The gods have saved me".

But they can also *curse*, and bring any amount of misfortune on their descendants. If the rain fails, it is owing to their anger; if a tree falls on you, they have directed its fall; if a crocodile bites you, the gods residing in the pool have sent it; if your child has fever and is delirious, they are in him, tormenting his soul; if your wife is sterile, they have prevented her from childbearing; perhaps the gods of your mother have

done this, because you had not given your maternal uncle the *tjumba* part of the lobolo, which he has the right to claim (I. p. 253); in fact any disease, any calamity may come from them. There are, of course, other sources of misfortune : the baloyi, for instance, of Heaven, and the bones will show who has caused the mischief; but the ancestor-gods are certainly the most powerful spiritual agency acting on man's life. Hence the necessity of propitiating them by offering prayers and sacrifices.

II. *The Means of Propitiation. Offerings and Sacrifices.*

It is no wonder that since these spirits are so terrible, their descendants have sought means of propitiating them The study of these rites is very interesting, and will throw more light on the ideas which the Bantus have of their ancestor-gods. Some of these means of propitiation bear a magical character. For instance, when Mankhelu wanted to induce the gods to sleep and leave him in peace, he took roots, which had been brought to light naturally by a swollen river, which had washed away the ground. The reason is clear; the gods are in the earth, therefore things found in the earth can influence them. So he cut these roots in small pieces, cooked them with the flesh of a goat, and drank the broth ; the assagai, which killed the goat, had been first smeared with a powder made of these roots, and he put the astragalus of the goat on his ankle, on the right side if the god to be propitiated belonged to the father's family, and on the left if it was one of his mother's ancestors. If the propitiatory ceremony was performed for a woman, the astragalus was tied with a strap " en bandouillère " round her body.

But the propitiatory rites very rarely bear a magical character : they are *religious acts*, viz., acts performed with the intention of influencing living, conscious and superior beings, and consist in most cases in gifts. Their general name is *mhamba*, a word which can be translated by offering, but which admits of a wider meaning, as we shall see. They are not *miri*, charms, or medicines similar to those employed in magic.

1) Classification of Offerings.

These offerings are much more complicated and varied, than they at first seem. They might, perhaps, be classified thus : —

1) The *family offerings* — those which concern the family alone, — and the *national offerings* — those which concern the whole clan.

2) The *simple offerings* called *gandjela*, and the *sacramental ones*, accompanied by the famous *tsu* which makes them a *hahla*, a real sacrifice.

3) The offerings attended with *bloodshed*, and those where there is no victim killed.

4) The *regular offerings*, made at certain dates, or in connection with definite events in the life of the family or of the clan, and those made in *special* circumstances, which have not arisen unexpectedly.

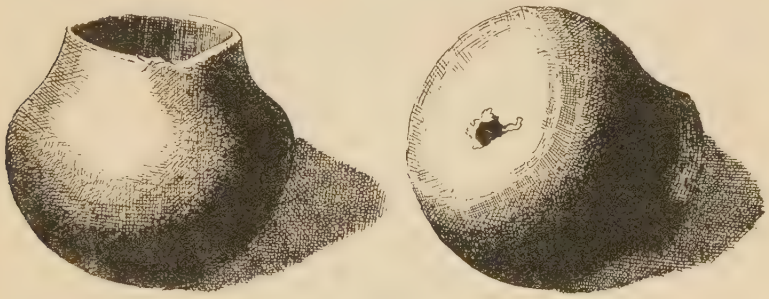
a) *The family offerings.*

Simple offerings (Gandjela).

Here the ritual is reduced to its minimum. The offering is made by the father of the family at the gandjelo, the altar, or place of worship. This is, as has already been pointed out, a little pot, placed at the right side of the entrance to the village, or under the tree, designated by the bones (I. p. 283). In some cases, especially if the headman is a medicine-man or magician, the gandjelo consists of a forked branch, planted in the ground, either inside a hut, or in the very middle of the square. Such was the case, in the village of Mankhelu (See illustration I, p. 4). His gandjelo was a branch of *nkonola* (or *nkonono*) ; this tree, the *mpfilu* and *shisalala* are the only trees which are used for the purpose. He had removed the bark in some places, and smeared the stems with his black powders, so that there were two dark rings of about 3 inches wide on the branch. A lot of curious things were to be seen, hanging from the lateral branches : bags full of roots, calabashes of different sizes, containing the precious drugs, pieces of the *nwabola* shrub, etc. When he

had earned some money or acquired something by accident, Mankhelu used to put these objects near the stem, and leave them there for the night in order to inform his gods of his good fortune. At the foot of the branch the earth was smeared with black clay, forming a circle with a little furrow made round the outside of it. Men, who are not so important as this great *anga*, are contented with the small pot I described before. This can be placed on the grave, if it happens to be near the village.

In the case of Sokis (I. p. 140) it was indeed the deceased's own mug, which had been pierced at the bottom in order to



Sokis' mug. The altar of primitive mankind.

allow the beer to sink easily into the ground, when an offering was made to the recently deceased by his relatives (1).

Regular offerings are brought to the altar by the headman. When he has finished preparing his *tobacco* for use, he carefully puts aside some leaves of it, and places them near the pot. When he has ground the tobacco for snuff he puts two little spoonfuls into the pot, one for the paternal, the other for the maternal gods, saying at the same time :

(1) I had the good fortune of obtaining this mug, which may well be called the altar of primitive humanity ! I offered Sokis' wife a little pig in exchange. She was quite willing to accept the bargain but her sister-in-law made objections, fearing doubtless that the deceased might be angry... The widow answered her thus : — When he was living how often did you not refuse him beer ! - You may do the same now, and accept the little pig. Thanks to the common-sense view taken by Sokis'wife I am now in possession of this precious pierced mug, and can give its fact simile on the adjoining plate.

Fole hi ledji ! Tlanganan mi djaha, mi nga ndji hobilise loko ndji djaha fole, mi ku ndji mi tjona.

Here is some tobacco ! Come all of you and take a pinch, and do not be angry with me when I snuff, nor say that I deprive you of your share.

Having made his offering the headman must return to his seat, on the hubo, without looking behind him : this is a taboo.

Another way of gandjela is the offering of a piece of cloth (nturu), which may be tied at the entrance, or to the tree of the village (p. 310). Liquids also are poured int the gandjelo : beer, when a beer feast is to take place, wine, when it has been bought at the neighbouring store ; palm-wine, when the big pot called gandjelo (see p. 42 for the explanation of this word in this particular connection) has been filled, and the precious drink has been brought to the village.

Occasional offerings are made, for instance, in a case of *shirwalo* (I. p. 378) when relatives-in-law have brought jars of beer. A little of the beer is first offered to the gods, in order that the pots may not get broken during the return journey. Another case is after a dream, in which the gods have asked for such and such an offering to be made (p. 358).

Sacramental offerings or Sacrifices (Ku hahla (Ro.), phahla Dj.)

These are of much greater importance than the simple ones and also differ from them in two ways, viz., they are always ordered by the divinatory bones, and accompanied by the sacramental *tsu*. The bones are first consulted, and give many indications, e. g., what must be the nature of the offering ; to which god it must be consecrated ; in which place the act of worship must be performed, (in the hut, behind it, at the door, in the square, in the sacred wood, or in the bush ?) When the ceremony takes place over the grave the bones reveal whether the officiant must stand at the head or at the feet. (See Chap. III, D. for the consultation of the bones).

Sacrifices of Bitterness. There is a progression in the offerings,

according to the value of the gift accompanying the *tsu*. In some cases, all that is given to the gods is the small amount of saliva, emitted in pronouncing the sacramental sound, or it may be that, instead of being well fermented and fine flavoured beer, the gift consists merely of water poured over sorghum or millet, a mixture which has neither taste nor value. These offerings are called " Sacrifices of Bitterness " (ku hahla hi shibiti), and form a most curious category. They are generally presented by a headman, who is overwhelmed with sorrow, and deprived of everything. " He shows his misery by offering nothing but his saliva. He leans his head against his shoulder with a look of profound sadness. His heart is bitter ! He has nothing ! He therefore does not try to win over his gods by presenting rich gifts to them. He wishes rather to gain their blessing by this appearance of abject misery. And they will indeed have pity on him ! " (Mboza) This is certainly touching! But this kind of offering, though showing more individual piety than others, must, however, only be made ritually, i. e., by order of the bones. The sacrifice of bitterness may be resorted to, when no evil has as yet fallen on the village, as a preventative against misfortune.

Sacrifices of the medicine-men. The Native physicians are, as has already been pointed out, very pious. Having inherited their art from their forefathers, as family secrets, they always implore the blessing of their ancestors on their various treatments. This is done by real sacrifices, performed with the *tsu* and a liturgical prayer. In Vol. I, p. 53, the religious ceremony which accompanies the monthly vapour bath administered to infants has been described ; the religious act takes place also in the hondola of the weaning (I. p. 57). These are typical cases. Another offering of the same nature is made on behalf of the man, who is about to *start out on a journey*, going for instance to Johannesburg. The doctor, having prepared the protective drugs in a pot, brings them to the entrance of the traveller's hut, calls his " patient ", then taking a little of the decoction ni his mouth, spits it at him with the sacramental *tsu* and prays in the following words:

Akhwari ! Abusayi ! Ndji hlaya psolepso ! Khongelwa a nga dlawi. Ku dlawa phalaburena ! Khombo a dji suke, dji ya ka Shiburi, dji ya ka Nkhabelane ! A a fambe psinene, a kandjetela balala, mitwa mi yetlele, ku yetlela ni tindjau. A a ye nwa mati ya kone, ma mu tjabisa hi djo tluka ledji.

" Akhwari ! Abusayi ! I say so. Death does not come to him for whom prayer is made ; death only comes to him who trusts in his own strength ! Let misfortune depart, let it go to Shiburi, and Nkhabelane (1). Let him travel safely ; let him trample on his enemies ; let thorns sleep, let lions sleep ; let him drink water wherever he goes, and let that water make him happy, by the strength of this leaf (viz., of my medicinal herbs) ".

To these words is generally added an invocation to the medicine-man's gods, who are entreated to bless the drugs they have given to their descendant, and to meet the traveller's gods in order to insure his success in this undertaking. The decoction is then used to wash the body of the young man. He will pay the fee on his return home.

Regular family sacrifices. We have seen them performed in connection with the most important events in life. At the *weaning* (but then, it was what one might term a medical sacrifice), *on the marriage day*, either publicly as amongst the Ronga clans (I. p. 111), or privately, by the bride's father alone, as isthe custom amongst the Nkuna (I. p. 119). The gods are entreated to give the newly married women " timbeleko ", births, i. e., children, as it seems that the power of begetting depends directly on the gods. Regular acts of worship are performed also at the *burial*, with the nkanye twig, which is called mhamba (I. p. 142), at the *crushing of the hut* (I. p. 159-164), on the days of *mahloko* (I. p. 211), and at the adjudication of the inheritance (I. p. 205).

I have already mentioned the stringent taboo in regard to the victims killed in these sacrifices. The portions distributed amongst the different relations must not be eaten either in the village of the deceased, or in those of the various visitors. This meat must be roasted on the road, and eaten then, and it

(1) The extremity of the land (Comp. I, p. 53).

is likewise taboo to season it at all. The inhabitants of the deceased's village can eat the meat boiled, but it is prohibited to add ground-nuts to the broth.

These are the great family sacrifices, in which the uterine nephews play their curious part, and on the occasion of which family matters are brought up and settled. They play a most important part in the life of the family, and I have therefore described them at length, when treating of the social life of the tribe, as here religion and social life are intimately united. There is therefore no need for me to add much more regarding them here. With their well determined and typical ritual they form the most definite and settled element of the religious life of the tribe.

Rangane asserts that another sacrifice is regularly performed in the Maluleke district. On the first occasion of the *cooking of the new mealies*, each headman prepares a little of the flour, takes a spoonful of it, and throws it away, praying at the same time to the Ba-Nyai spirits, i. e., the gods of the Ba-Nyai, who have been conquered by the Maluleke. He calls this "magandjelo ya ku ñwantseka", i. e., "sacrifice tasted and thrown away". This is evidently to propitiate the gods, who were the first owners of the country and who might work havoc on the invaders. Compare p. 351 the respect shown by Mahazule to the Libombo sacred wood, and also the curious request of the Samaritans, II Kings. XVII.

Extraordinary family sacrifices. By these, I mean specially those offered *in cases of disease.* The bones, having revealed that the disease is caused by the gods (and not by the wizards, nor by Heaven, which are two other possibilities), and also that it comes from such and such a god, a god of bitterness, or a god of the paternal or the maternal line, now indicate the nature of the offering which must be made, the place, and sometimes even the person, who must make it. Here is the detailed description, given by Viguet, of a sacrifice made for a ntukulu, an uterine nephew, who is ill: — "Suppose", says Viguet, "that I am the sick child. The bones have said that an offering must be made to the gods of our *bakokwana* (mother's family); so we go to

our maternal relatives, to my *malume*, and ask him to perform the sacrifice. The offering may consist of a hen or an ornament like a bracelet. If it is a hen, my malume will kill it in accordance with the ceremonial rite, take a few of the feathers of the neck, which have been soiled by the blood, put them to his mouth, and spit on them, making *tsu* (the blood of the victim thus mingles with the saliva of the priest), and say (bulabulela):

You, our gods, and you so and so, here is our mhamba (offering)! Bless this child, and make him live and grow; make him rich, so that when we visit him, he may be able to kill an ox for us... You are useless, you gods; you only give us trouble! For, although we give you offerings, you do not listen to us! We are deprived of everything! You, so and so (naming the god, to which the offering must be addressed in accordance with the decree given by the bones, i. e., the god who was angry, and who induced the other gods to come and do harm to the village, by making the child ill), you are full of hatred! You do not enrich us! All those who succeed, do so by the help of their gods! — Now we have made you this gift! Call your ancestors so and so; call also the gods of this sick boy's father, because his father's people did not steal his mother: these people, of such and such a clan, came in the daylight (to lobola the mother). So come here to the altar! Eat and distribute amongst yourselves our ox (the hen!) according to your wisdom.

Then the priest takes a feather from one of the wings, a claw of the left foot and the beak, and after tying them together, attaches them to the left wrist or left ankle of the child, or to his neck, passing the string over the shoulder and under the left arm; (everything is on the left side, because it is an offering to the gods of the mother's family; everything would be on the right side if it were to the gods of the father). These parts of the victim are called *psirungulo*, the religious amulet.

When the offering consists of a bracelet, the bones having so ordered, the priest will pour consecrated beer over it, and say his prayer. The bracelet will then be fastened to the child's foot. He may not remove it, nor exchange it for something else: it belongs to the gods.

This description, given by Viguet, is typical for the sacrifices offered in the case of a disease. In the Maluleke clan the sacrifice made for a sick person is as follows: — the headman takes beer, which has been specially prepared for the gods and is very much diluted, the beer called *byala bosila*, and a twig of male nkanye. He orders the patient to sit near the altar, and after dipping the twig into the beer, sucks it and says the following words:

Phaa! (this word corresponds to tsu): this is byala bosila, you Makhima! Take it and convey it to your father Mashakadzi; call each other and come together here to drink! Let all disease depart! Heal this man!

I must also mention the sacrifice performed in the curious ceremony of *dlaya shilongo*, in the case of marriage between near relatives (I. p. 245), and will now proceed to describe two others, viz., the sacrifice on behalf of the son, who has just returned from Johannesburg, and the sacrifice of reconciliation.

When a young man, who has been absent from home for a long time, *returns to his village*, he cannot be received again into the community without special precautions being taken. If there has been a death in the kraal he must be purified from the collective contamination before eating the food of the village. This is the luma milomo (I. p. 146), and it is in connection with the defilement from death. Some of the provisions of the deceased, kept in a pot and diluted with hot water, must be poured between his two great toes, and he must afterwards rub them together. But, before this, a religious act is performed. Before the boy, who is on the return journey, is allowed to enter his native village, he has to stay for a short time just outside, while his father, seated at the great entrance, cuts the neck of a hen, which he has previously selected, and throws it on the boy's luggage. Then the victim leaps about (phuphumela) in its agony. The officiant plucks out some of the bloodstained feathers, pronounces the tsu, and says:

Here is your son. He has returned home safely, because you have accompanied him! Perhaps he has brought back pounds sterling with him to lobola. Perhaps he will now take a wife! I do not know. The great thing is that he is healthy, and you have brought him back safely.

The Sacrifice of Reconciliation. One of the most curious of the religious acts performed in connection with the family is called ku hahlela madjieta, viz., to perform a sacramental act in connection with the madjieta. *Djieta* (dji-ma) means a *rash oath*, or an oath *with imprecation*. If two brothers quarrel, and the younger believing himself to be the injured one, breaks off all connection with his brother, he may say to the latter in his anger: "Never shall I speak to you again, or come any more to your village!" This is a djieta. The two men can remain for years without the slightest intercourse with each other. But should a serious disease break out in the village or the younger, and should the bones order him to offer a sacrifice, he is at once in a predicament. He has no right to offer the sacrifice himself, for, according to the great law of priesthood in ancestrolatry, it is his elder brother, who must do it for him. The bones, on being consulted again, give the response: — "There is something in the way. You two have tied a knot. Untie it first, then offer the sacrifice." The younger brother will then go to the elder, and say: "I have sinned in swearing that I would never come again to your village. Let us hahlela djieta, i. e., accomplish the sacrificial act, which will cancel the rash oath (1). The elder will scold him soundly, but will

(1) See also my article on "The Sacrifice of Reconciliation" amongst the Ba-Ronga (South African Journal of Science. February 1911). The djieta is any rash oath, and not only one pronounced against a brother. If a man swears that he will never enter a pool again (because he has been stung), or a river (because he has been followed by a crocodile), it is likewise a *djieta*. Should he find it necessary to enter this lake or this river again, he must first hahlela djieta, i. e. cancel his oath by a sacramental act. This is not necessarily a prayer to his gods, but only an invocation addressed to the imprecation itself: "You, djieta, I said I would enter this lake no more, but I want to *tjeba* (p. 71) and to eat fish! Don't cause me to suffer from it." Then he takes some water in his hands, and throws it into the pool.

eventually accept his excuses. This meeting for confession and reconciliation is called ku hahla madjieta, even if no other act, no *tsu*, or prayer, is performed. — The reconciliation may, however, be celebrated, in a more solemn way, by a ceremony, which is attended by the elder members of the family. The brother, who pronounced the imprecation, prepares a decoction of a special herb, called mudahomu, and pours it into a sala shell. Everybody assembles on the square, and the two former enemies sit in the midst, on the bare ground. The offender raises the shell to his lips, sips the decoction, spits it out with the customary tsu, and says : " This is our djieta. We pronounced it, because our hearts were bitter. To-day it must come to an end. It is right that we make peace. " The other brother, the offended one, then takes the shell, and after going through the same rite of the tsu, says : " I was justly angry, because it was he who first offended me ! But let it be ended to-day ; let us eat out of the same spoon, drink out of the same cup, and be friends again. " Then he breaks the shell, and they drink and enjoy themselves together.

b) *The National Offerings.*

They are those offered at the Capital, to the ancestors of the chief, but on behalf of the whole clan, because the gods of the reigning family have control over the clan, just in the same way as the chief over the families of his subjects.

The regular national offering is the *luma* of the first fruits, their consecration, which I have described at length, as one of the principal manifestations of the National life (I. p. 366–376). The Bantu conception of hierarchy is clearly illustrated by this custom : the gods must be the first to enjoy the produce of the new year, then the chief, the sub-chiefs, the counsellors, the headmen, then the younger brothers in order of age. There is a stringent taboo directed against the person who precedes his superiors in the enjoyment of the first fruits ; this law being applicable to Kafir corn or bukanye in certain clans, and

also to sorghum, pumpkin leaves and beer, etc., in others. (1)

The religious meaning of the rite is clear : the gods, if deprived of the right they possess by virtue of their hierarchical position, would avenge themselves by threatening the harvest ; so they must be given their share first.

In the Maluleke clan, where the customs seem to have been influenced by the Ba-Nyai, there is also a regular sacrifice offered at the capital, when *the crops are still growing*. Rangane describes it as follows : " When the chief sees that the Kafir corn is threatened by the vermin in the fields, he says : " Perhaps the master of the country (i. e. my ancestors who are dead) are angry ; perhaps I have not worshipped them well." He summons the sons of the royal family (mangalakana) from all parts of the country, prepares beer, and selects a goat for sacrifice ; they assemble around the graves with the sons and the uterine nephews, where they worship, and then, after eating all that is to be eaten, they return ".

The extraordinary national offerings, are those in connection with the rain. If the rain falls at the right season, the sacrifice will not be made ; but should it fail to do so, the whole ritual will be gone through. This sacrifice for the rain, is, as has already been mentioned (p. 295) called *phokolo* amongst the Bilen clans, and is performed in the following way : — The bones are consulted, and a special pot, called phokolo, is buried just below the surface of the ground, in the middle of a clean place well hidden in a dense thicket of thorny shrubs. The victim, a black ram without any white spot, is brought there, and killed in accordance with the ceremonial rites. (See the prominent part played by the chief's uterine nieces in this sacrifice which is preceded by an offering of beer, I. p. 296). The grass of the paunch is squeezed over the pot, so that the green liquid drips

(1) Amongst the Maluleke a *second luma* is necessary after harvest, when brewing the first beer. It seems that the sub-chiefs or even headmen, settled in districts far away from the Capital, can obtain a special license to perform the luma ceremony on their own account, but they must first apply for this permission, and, after having finished, they must forward the chief's share to him.

into it, and the blood is spread all over the place. Four furrows have been dug in the form of a cross with the pot as a centre, and pointing towards the four cardinal points. Little girls (" who are not yet wise ", i. e. they are not yet aware of sexual matters) are sent to fetch water and fill the pot until it overflows into the furrows. This being done, they go back to their mothers. The *mbelele* rite will immediately follow (p. 296). This phokolo sacrifice is the religious act in connection with ancestrolatry, the mbelele being actuated by entirely different ideas. The phokolo rite is replaced in the Nkuna clan by the official visit to the graves, with an old mourning song, and the custom of beating the mounds with sticks; (whether to awake the gods or show them the dissatisfaction of the worshippers, I do not know). In many sacred woods, a living *human victim* is offered to the gods, as already mentioned (p. 357). The phokolo rite is a regular sacrifice attended with bloodshed.

Another national act of worship, which recalls the rite of the nkanye twig in funeral ceremonies, is performed with the aid of the *great mhamba*, to which I already made reference in I, p. 360. This is a most curious object, the mhamba par excellence, in the Tembe and Zihlahla clans. It is so venerated that people fear to call it by its own name, and refer to it as hlengwe, riches. According to the description of Hlekisa, (a Tembe Native), it consists of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs. When a chief dies, the more or less imperishable portions of his body, such as the nails and the hair of his head and beard, are carefully cut, kneaded together with the dung of the oxen which have been killed at his death, and a kind of pellet is thus made. This is bound round with thongs of hide. When another chief dies, a second pellet is made and added to the first one, and so on down through centuries. The mhamba of the Tembe clan is at the present time about one foot in length, says my informant, who is a cousin of the man to whom the custody of this sacred relic has been committed, and who has seen it often. The guardian has to be of a particularly even temperament, and must not be given to the use of strong language, nor to intoxication. The chief gives him

money, or perhaps a wife for his trouble, because he incurs such a responsibility towards the country. He keeps the mhamba in a hut specially built for the purpose, at the back of his own village. Whenever he is called upon to use it for a religious purpose he must abstain from sexual relations for a whole month. The sacrifice then performed will consist of a goat, slaughtered in the usual way, but consecrated without the ordinary tsu. The tsu is replaced by the mhamba, which the officiant will brandish in the same way as the nkanye twig (I. p. 142) in the funeral ceremony, tracing circles in the air, and invoking the gods. — This object is wrapped in great mystery. Mboza thinks that the *ntjobo* of the Nondwane, kept in the sacred hut of nyokwekulu (I. p. 360), the national medicine, was the same thing, but most people were ignorant of what it consisted. At any rate the same law applied to both : it was considered the greatest calamity for it to fall into the hands of enemies in time of war. When the clan is forced to seek refuge in flight, the keeper of the mhamba is the first to flee. The whole army stands between him with the precious amulet of the clan and the enemy. It is more than its flag, and will not be taken until all the warriors have been killed or dispersed. — It is said that once during the war between Tembe and Maputju, the latter succeeded in gaining possession of the mhamba ; a terrible drought ensued, for the gods of Maputju were irritated, as they were of the same family as those of Tembe (I. p. 229). Not knowing what to do with it, the Maputju at length cut open a goat between the hind legs, and introduced the mhamba into its body. They then led the goat to the river, which marks the boundary of the Tembe country, and threw it into the water. Hlekisa's grandfather, a Tembe man, who had settled in Maputju, was asked to lead the goat. — Thus the rightful owners recovered their mhamba. (Is there not a striking resemblance between this story and that of the capture of the ark of the covenant by the Philistines ?)

The mhamba of the Zihlahla country used to be kept by a man named Petshela, who carried it with him from place to place, when fleeing, refusing to trust it to the care of any, save

his own children. Is it still in existence, since the clan was deprived of its independence ? In Nondwane the national amulet was taken care of by the Godhlela family, as already mentioned in I, p. 361, and this function was hereditary.

2) The Main Elements of Ancestral Worship.

The sequence of the religious acts in a typical sacrifice, like that performed at the crushing of the hut is as follows :

1) The bones are first consulted and reveal to which god, when, how, and by whom the sacrifice must be made.

2) The officiant, who is as a rule the eldest male member of the family, comes and presides over the sacrifice.

3) The victims are brought by those, who have either been designated, or who have volunteered, to provide them.

4) They are killed by the uterine nephews, the goats or sheep by piercing the heart, the hens by cutting the throat. Sometimes the face of the goat is directed to a certain point of the horizon.

5) The victim bleats, or if it is a hen, jumps about on the ground in its agony. At each thrust of the assagay, or of the knife, the uterine nephews ejaculate their cries of joy. (1) This is their way of consenting (pfumela) or answering, for they accept the offering on behalf of the gods. (2) The whole crowd joins in these manifestations of joy.

(1) Amongst the Ba Nyai they clap their hands and shout : " Ndiyo ! " — " all right ".

(2) It is not necessary to add more about the part played by the uterine nephews in the sacrifice, for it has been explained in detail in Vol. I, p. 255 when treating of the family system. The two great reasons for their taking such a prominent part in the religious ritual seem to be the following : 1) during the life of their maternal uncle, and also of all their mother's family, they were on very intimate terms with them, " even eating from the same piece of food, not fearing their saliva ". Therefore they now eat the flesh of the victim instead of the ancestor-gods of their mother. 2) Maternal relatives have a special religious duty towards their nephews. They act as their priests (I. p.), offerings being frequently made to the gods of the mother's family through the agency of the maternal uncle. Hence the fact that uterine nephews take such a peculiar part in the ritual of the worship.

6) The victim is cut open, and one limb, or small pieces of each limb, are put aside for the gods ; the half digested grass, psanyi, found in the intestines, especially in the *shihlakahla* stomach, is put aside carefully.

7) The priest takes a little of the psanyi mixed with the blood of the victim, puts it to his lips, emits a little saliva, and spits out the whole in making *tsu*, this being the means of consecrating the offering, or, so to say, of forwarding it to the gods.

8) He pronounces the prayer — occasionally interrupted by some member of the family, who has a complaint to make.

9) In certain cases of special misfortune, whilst praying he squeezes the green liquid contained in the psanyi, over his hearers, who rub their bodies with it.

10) One of the nephews "cuts his prayer" (i. e. brings it to an end) by taking in his mouth a little of the consecrated beer or wine, or part of the hen's gizzard.

11) The uterine nephews steal the offering and run away, followed by the throng, who throw pellets of psanyi at them. They eat the portion of the gods.

12) Should the offering have been made on the behalf of a particular individual, the astragalus of the goat, or some parts of the hen are tied to him and worn for a time on the left or right side of the body : left if the offering was made to the maternal ancestors, right if it was made to the paternal gods.

Let us examine more closely some of these acts, so that we may better understand the elements of this worship.

a) The priesthood.

The Thonga have no sacerdotal caste, but, as has already been pointed out, the right of officiating in religious ceremonies is strictly confined to *the eldest brother*. All the offerings must pass through him. To supplant him is a great taboo, and would entail the malediction of the gods, and even the death of the trespasser. There are, however, some minor offerings which anyone is allowed to bring to his gods : for instance, a lover who has been jilted, may, after having consulted the bones, give his

god something in order to obtain his aid in regaining the favour of the girl he loves. But, as a rule, nobody must *hahla*, even *gandjela*, before the death of his parents. If, after their death, their son should happen to dream of them, he must worship the deceased by pouring some ground tobacco on his wooden pillow; this being the commencement of his religious functions: "he begins to learn to gandjela" (Rangane), and, if he is the eldest, he may in course of time become the priest of the whole family. As regards the great offerings, ordered by the bones and accompanied by tsu, he would commit a serious offence if he attempted to offer them during the life time of an elder brother. The eldest sister officiates as well as the eldest brother.

The beginnings of the *constitution of a sacerdotal caste* may be seen by the fact that in each clan, the mhamba, the sacred object used by the royal family to invoke its gods, or the national drug of invulnerability, is entrusted to the care of a certain man, whose office is hereditary. As soon as the political tie becomes stronger, and the power of the paramount chief greater, the religious acts which are performed at the Capital, gain more in importance, and the one who officiates becomes a kind of high priest. Should this evolution continue, it is easy to see how a sacerdotal class may be formed at the expense of the primitive family worship, which thus loses more and more its importance. Amongst the Thonga this has not yet taken place, and their religious system seems to correspond to a very ancient state of things: it is, no doubt, the pure form of primitive Ancestrolatry.

b) The Conception of the Offerings.

Let us now consider the nature, the value, the most important features in the ritual and the real meaning of the offerings.

As regards their nature they are indeed most varied, consisting in the first place, of *domestic animals*, the ox, the goat, the fowl, which are only used by the subjects, the sheep being the proper offering of the chief (p. 52). Pigs are not accepted for the altar, neither are antelopes, and the other kinds of game. I have never heard of any offering consisting of the flesh of wild beasts. The victim is generally killed, but there are cases

of its being consecrated *living*. If a hen or a goat is given living to the gods, (a ring sometimes being attached to the leg of the fowl), it is taboo henceforth to kill it; if it dies, it must not be eaten, and it must also be replaced by another. Living offerings seem to be presented to possessing spirits (Ch. III. B.), rather than to ancestor spirits. Another kind of living offering is the *human sacrifice* made in certain sacred woods in order to obtain rain, but they rarely resort to this. "The victim wanders about in the forest till he dies," says Mboza; "the gods take him".

A third kind of offering is the *produce of the fields*, not only the Kafir Corn in the official luma, but also the various kinds of beer, and tobacco. Gods seem to want not only substantial food, but also wine, beer, tobacco, intoxicants and narcotics!

Clothing, especially *handkerchiefs* of various designs (these designs being often prescribed by the bones) are another offering. The mhamba may even consist of ornaments, e. g., the bracelet in the sacrifice for the uterine nephews (p. 368); but it is the sick boy who wears it (instead of the gods?)

Lastly, one sometimes finds on the grave "*wealth*", elephants' tusks, or hippopotamus' teeth, affirms Nkolele, thus showing that the living try to connect the gods with their own welfare.

From the magic forked branch on the altar of Mankhelu hung any amount of objects, e. g., old hoes, astragalus bones of oxen (especially of those taken to Sikororo in the war of 1901, I. p. 484), all his treasures, and especially the famous calabashes of medicine, and occasionally baskets of divinatory bones. I have never heard of any money, however, being consecrated to the gods. The chief, but only the chief, can use *earth* in the sacrificial act, for he is the master of the earth, which has been given to him by his ancestors, and so can offer it.

All things considered, it must be confessed that *the actual value* of the offering, viz., of the part really given to the gods, is very little. The sacrificing Jew made a burnt offering: he burnt the victim to please Jehovah with the smoke of the roasting flesh ascending to heaven! Nothing of the kind is met with

amongst the Thonga. They make offerings, which indeed cost them nothing! They give their gods a goat, but they eat it themselves! From each limb a small piece is cut: this is enough for the gods, and the uterine nephews will steal even that. The beer is sometimes diluted to such an extent that it hardly deserves the name any more. I have even heard of offerings consisting in flour mixed with water, a mixture which nobody would dare offer to any visitor. How must this be explained? Mboza assured me that it was done to *deceive* (kanganyisa) the spirits of the ancestors, as if they were still the wretched old people from whom the grandchildren used to steal the food (I. p. 131). But I doubt the truth of this explanation. The valueless nature of the offerings rather comes from the fact that Natives know perfectly well that the gods do not eat, nor take what is offered to them, and that the fowls running about appropriate it. Telling the story of the theophany described p. 359, the old priest Nkolele made the following remark: "Even if one kills only a chicken, the god is quite content, for, to him, it has the same value as an ox". This seems to be the true explanation. The gods do not ask for real food, or wealth; they only consider the "mhamba" as a token of love from their descendants, and as a sign that these have not forgotten them, but will do their duty towards them. (1) If this be the case, the offerings, which have little material worth, acquire a real religious or spiritual value. But it must be confessed that, although this may really have been the old conception, the greatest preoccupation of the worshippers now-a-days is to follow exactly the details of the *prescribed ritual*. This is what makes an offering acceptable, and not the disposition of the heart towards the gods... It is possible that an offering may be refused by the gods. A worshipper may be "overcome" by his mhamba, and he would then return home shivering, hav-

(1) In Chinese Ancestrolatry the same is to be seen. Worshippers do not offer their ancestors real money, etc., but paper representations, which they burn for the ancestors, thinking that the spirits of the various articles will enter the other world, and be accepted by the spirits of the deceased. Probably Bantu worshippers have unconsciously got hold of a similar idea.

ing only increased the anger of the spirits. Therefore, let the rules of the ritual be well observed and especially the indications of the divinatory bones.

Some features of this ritual are most interesting, especially the *tsu*, so often mentioned, by which the offering is consecrated. What does it mean? The Natives themselves are unable to explain it, so we are reduced to mere supposition. It consists in an emission of saliva, generally mixed with something from the victim : some of the short feathers of the neck soiled with blood, if it is a fowl, or a little psanyi also kneaded with blood if a goat. But in the sacrifice of bitterness (p. 364) there is merely saliva : this, however, is a true "hahla", and this fact shows that the saliva is a gift, the *personal gift of the worshipper* : he first gives his gods something coming from himself, mingling it with the blood or psanyi of the victim, and only then approaches his gods. So there seems to be a deep meaning underlying this sacramental act, though most of the worshippers are not aware of it (a fact, which unhappily occurs in all religions) ; but though unconscious, it exists and has actuated the rite : the gift of oneself is necessary to obtain the favour of the Divinity. — What is the intention implied in adding the blood and psanyi? It probably informs the gods that such and such a victim has been offered to them, hence the words commonly pronounced at the beginning of the prayer : "Mhamba hi leyi!" — "Here is the offering!" Is there any intent in the *choice of the blood* to make this intimation? Is the blood (ngati) considered as containing the life of the animal, as was the case amongst the Jews, who used it in the sacrifices "to cover the soul" or the sins of the worshipper (hence the idea of atonement)? There is no sign of there having been a similar conception among the Thonga. It is true that they prefer to resort to sacrifices with blood in cases of misfortune, disease and death, when some idea of guilt may be entertained. The moral element, if it ever really existed, has, however, entirely disappeared from the actual horizon of ancestrolatry.

On the other hand, the use of the *psanyi*, the half digested grass found in the shihlakahla stomach, is easier to explain. It

is evidently a means of purification for the family, if not exactly from sin, at least from misfortune (khombo): hence their custom of washing their bodies with the green liquid extracted from it, a religious act which to us seems very disgusting, but to the Natives quite clean, their ideas about dung being very different from ours (p. 37). A large ball of psanyi is put on the head of the bride after the dlaya shilongo ceremony (I. p. 245) in order to remove the dangers of consaguineous marriage, and so help her to have children. Pellets of this substance are thrown too at the uterine nephews, when they run away, after stealing the offering (I. p. 162); or at the roof of the deceased's hut, when it is officially closed, with the aim of preventing the danger of death: the slaughtered goat has to contribute in this way to the restoration of peace and happiness to the family.

No special use is made of the *bones* of the victim, except, as we shall see later, in offerings on behalf of possessed people. The only part kept is the *astragalus*, or the *psirungulo* just described, which are tied to the person on whose behalf the sacrifice has been made, probably to insure for him a permanent blessing from the gods.

It must be observed that the sacrificial ritual, as well as the medical art, lays great stress on the *sex* of the offerings. As a rule, there must be opposition between the sex of the victim and that of the one for whom, or to whom, the sacrifice is made. A woman is prayed for by means of a he-goat or a cock, and a man by a she-goat or a hen. Another course, which is considered still more praiseworthy, is, when sacrificing on behalf of a man, to add a second offering of a cock, " in order to quench the first one (timula mhamba), so that it may keep quiet, and that it may cool down, because the first offering may cause annoyance and overcome them " (Mboza). This idea seems to be that an offering, if otherwise inefficient, is helped and amended by another of the other sex. So, if one has wrongly performed the funeral ceremony of the twig with a female nkanye (I. p. 142), since female trees are of no use in this connection, it will be necessary to quench the first mhamba and renew the ceremony with a male twig.

The nkanye twig is a mhamba! This leads us, before leaving the subject, to consider the *real and full meaning of this term*.

Gifts offered to the gods, such as victims, Kafir corn, handkerchiefs, etc., are mhamba. But, as has already been pointed out, the word has a wider meaning. In the nkanye twig ceremony, nothing is given to the gods It is, however, a mhamba. The sacred collection of the nails and hair of the deceased chiefs is also called so ; it is indeed the mhamba par excellence, though it constitutes no real gift to the gods. — Nkohlele, the great priest, who officiated in the Lebombo, was also designated by the name of " the Lebombo Mhamba ". — The flint used by Mankhelu to cause the rain to fall by invoking Rivimbi, is also a mhamba, the one specially appropriate for that great god.

My old friend once made another "mhamba", which he described to me in a very interesting conversation we had together. He was telling me the particulars of the battle of Nov. 1901, during the Sikororo war (I. p. 485), when suddenly jumping to his feet and taking a small bundle of grass, he said : " Hear! I will show you the mhamba I made when the enemy rushed on us. I took a bundle of grass like those which women use for binding their sticks, and feverishly separated the blades, saying : ' Let them fail to surround us, or to entice us ! ' Then I scattered them in all directions and said : ' Let them be so dispersed, carried off and destroyed ! ' And this is exactly what happened. On my return from the battle I showed all the army how I had prayed. " The old general's spontaneous appeal to the gods on behalf of his country in its hour of supreme danger is indeed worthy of notice, and it also furnishes another proof that the *mhamba* is " any object or act, which aims at establishing a bond between the gods and their worshipper. " Both the nkanye twig, (whose " brother " remains in the hands of the deceased), and the sacred object consisting of the hair and nails of the late chiefs also provide this connection. The act of Mankhelu symbolising before his gods the rout of the enemy is also a mhamba ; it is a prayer in action, which must have a decided influence on the gods.

If this is indeed the conception of the mhamba and of the offering, their spiritual, and religious value cannot be denied. Whatever place the ritual may have in the ceremonies of Ancestrolatry, the offering is not a mere external gift appeasing the gods by its material value : it is a means of really entering into relationship with those powerful spirits in order to obtain their favour.

c) The Prayers.

The act of prayer is called *khongota* (Ro.), *khongela* (Dj.) (the same word being also employed to mean "supplicate"); or *bulabulela*, to speak to, or to scold the gods; *bukutjela* means a long, meandering prayer in which the officiant says the same thing over and over again. I have given sixteen various texts of prayer when describing the manifold religious acts of the Thonga : two prayers of medicine men (I. 53, II. 366); those pronounced on the day of marriage (I. p. 3); of death, with the nkanye twig (I. p. 161); at the distribution of the widows (I. 205); at the death of a sister (I. 213); in the ceremony of killing the tie of consanguinity (I. 245); on offering the first fruits (I. 368); before the tjeba fishing (II. p. 70); when sneezing (II. 337); on offering tobacco at the altar (II. p. 363); for a sick nephew (II. p. 368); at the sacrifice of reconciliation (II. p. 371); see also Mankhelu's prayers before the battle (II. p. 382), and Nkolele's invocation in the Lebombo wood (p. 359).

Most of these prayers have an *extremely liturgical* character. Everybody knows what must be said on each occasion of a regular sacrifice. The personal element is almost totally wanting. Here are the principal "moments" of a typical prayer.

After the consecration of the offering with the sacramental tsu, a kind of *dedication*, the officiant sometimes begins with the words: "Abusayi! Akhvari!", or "Ibusayi! Ikhwari!" The etymology of these words is unknown. They are pronounced with a gentle intonation, as if to express deep feeling, and their meaning is, according to Mboza: "I am not angry with you!

" It is the *tisola* of the heathen," said the same informant. Tisola, in the Christian language of the Thonga means to humble, or condemn oneself, in asking for forgiveness.

Then comes the *invocation*. If the sacrifice is on behalf of a sick person, the god, to whom the offering is made, having been designated by the bones as the cause of the misfortune, is called, and asked to bring thither all the other gods, whom he had induced to aid him in punishing the patient; or the priest may call first his own father, and entreat him to go and bring his grandfather, the latter to bring his ancestor, and so on till the last named. The ancestors of the main line are then sent to call all the great uncles, and all the deceased of collateral lines. Or, if praying for the welfare of the country, the officiant will address his furthest back ancestor first, because he is the one who gave the land to his descendants, and then call the son, grandson of this ancient founder of the dynasty, continuing the succession of generations until he reaches his own father. It seems as if one wanted to have as many gods as possible present at the ceremony. The gods of the father's family are also summoned, if the sacrifice is made to the gods of the mother's (p. 368).

The *request* follows the invocation, and this naturally differs with the circumstances. At the luma sacrifice (January) the priest asks the gods to increase the produce of the fields. At the family gatherings, after a death, the elder brother entreats the gods to bless the family, to prevent bad feelings, or strife, to give wisdom and strength to the new headman, that he may be successful in his rule over the village.

When some great misfortune is the occasion for this religious act being performed, the request is preceded, or followed, by a regular *insulting* of the gods. There are two words used to designate this curious part of the prayer: *holobela*, to scold the gods, or *rukatela*, the real word for " to insult ". There is an instance of this strange impertinent way of addressing the gods in the sacrifice for the sick nephew. (p. 368). These insults are generally uttered while the priest is squeezing the psanyi over the shoulders of his subordinates.

The last feature of the prayer is *its sudden termination*, when one of the uterine nephews puts a portion of the victim into the officiant's mouth, thus " cutting his oration " (tjema). This is indeed a part of the ritual. When the victim is a hen, it is its gizzard which has been half roasted during the long prayer that is used for the purpose. The priest eats it, and so is the first to partake of the flesh of the offering.

Prayers to the ancestors do not reveal very much religious feeling, and are, at any rate, absolutely devoid of awe. Whilst sacrificing the Natives laugh, speak in a loud voice, dance, sing obscene songs, even interrupt the prayer with their remarks, and insult each other about family matters. The officiant himself sits on the seat designated by the bones, and speaks in a monotonous way, looking straight in front of him in utter indifference. There is nothing in his demeanour which denotes fear or even respect. If the gods were indeed real old people, still living, he could not address them with more familiarity. This leads us finally to consider in what the divinity of ancestor-gods consists.

d) The Divine Nature of the Ancestor-Gods.

I have brought together in a preceding paragraph (p. 347 and 59) all that the Natives say about their gods. Now let us return to them, after having studied the religious ritual, and ask : What do all these ceremonies reveal about the conceptions the Thonga have of the ancestral spirits which they worship ? A striking contrast exists in their ideas. On the one hand, the ancestor-gods are *truly gods*, endowed with the attributes of divinity ; whilst, on the other, they seem to be nothing but mere *human beings*, exactly on the same level as their worshippers.

1) *They are divine !* When an old decrepit man or woman dies, he at once becomes a god : he has entered the domain of infinity. The Thonga have not a very clear idea of infinity. They have, however a technical term for it : " lepsi nga yiki helo (Dj.), or mbangu (Ro.) " — " that which does not reach the point where it ends. " This notion has certainly been

applied to the shades which have reached the rank of psikwembu : — The psikwembu are *omnipresent*. As Mankelu says: " For them there is no such thing as distance (a psi na kule) " ; they are everywhere present (psi kone hikwaku). They are like heaven, the sun and the moon. There is no place where it can be said the moon is not. " The notion of *omnipresence* is perhaps that which has been understood most clearly. *Omniscience* is also believed in : the gods know what their descendants do, though they may be separated from them, perhaps dwelling in distant lands. *Omnipotence* results from the fact that they control everything in the life of their descendants. They are superior to wizards in this respect. As regards their connection with Heaven, I have never heard the point discussed. Natives do not philosophise. Thus the ancestral spirits are real gods endowed with divine attributes

2) *They are still, however, but men !* They are not transcendent beings before whom miserable sinners tremble and offer prayers. The attitude of the worshippers, which I have just described, the liberty they take in insulting their gods, shows that they consider them as exactly on the same level as themselves. This human nature of the gods is clearly shown by two facts : the limits of their power and their want of moral character. The domain in which they exercise their power is limited, it being only *that of their own family ;* they watch over their descendants, bless or punish them, but they are absolutely indifferent to other men, and do not bother over their affairs more than they did when still alive on earth. I have nothing to fear or to hope from my neighbour's gods, if I do not belong to the same " shibongo " (I. p. 333). The gods of the royal family are invoked on behalf of the whole country, and have power to give the rain to the land ; but it is the chief, and his uncles, who must approach and sacrifice to them. I have no right to do so. It is true that an exception seems to be made in the case of the gods of bitterness, or of the bush, who attack the traveller, although he belongs to another family. But this is indeed only exceptional, it being their kinsfolk, who did not bury them, who are most exposed to their wrath.

Another proof that they are men is this : although as gods they have acquired such divine ontological powers, they have not made any real moral progress. They are not better than they were as men. Their *character* is that of suspicious old people, who resent any want of respect, or of attention, on the part of their descendants. They wish to be thought of, and presented with offerings. It seems that they are not actually in need of anything, for they live in abundance, but they exact a punctual observance of the duties of their descendants in regard to them. They must *luma,* eat the first fruits, and have their share of the tobacco leaves and also of the ground tobacco. They are jealous, and avenge themselves when forgotten. (1) The only sin, which seems to be worthy of punishment is to neglect them. There are, however, two other faults which they strongly condemn, and for which they may even kill their descendants: the first is any serious *transgression against the law of hierarchy* (as we saw, when dealing with the sacrifice of reconciliation); they punish especially the young man, even though he be the chief, who dares so to encroach upon the right of the *regular priest*, which is a great taboo ; secondly, they kill a man who loses all restraint in sexual relations; when any one gives way to that crime, people say: " The gods will lead him into the thick bush and kill him there. " To other sins they are quite indifferent. Mboza even asserted, with a sadness which reminded me of the complaints of Asaph in Ps. LXXII, that men of bad habits do not become ill or meet with misfortune,

(1) In a very interesting tale, which is unique, and which I owe to Camilla and have published in "Les Chants et Contes des Ba Ronga" p. 264, we hear of the people of Mashaken, near Lourenço Marques forgetting for many years to make offerings to their gods. Famine ensues. The men go to the marsh to cut sugar cane. They are unable to break them, and the gods chase them away. The women, who come to a place where honey is flowing from a tree, try to take the combs, but their hands break off and remain fixed to the spot! The bones order Sabulana, a young girl, to go to the sacred wood to sacrifice. She enters the forest and sees the gods assembled. They say to her : " Tell your people that they have sinned, because they have tilled the ground, and harvested without presenting us with any offerings. Now we are glad, because they have come to invoke us." This story was told me as a tale, not as a legend of the sacred woods.

the bad cough only attacks the good ones, and wizards bewitch them and do not go to the bad fellows, "for the gods see that they are not worth anything ! "

In conclusion, I should say that what is wanting in the conception of the ancestor-gods, compared with the God of higher religions, is both the transcendence and the moral attributes.

III. *General Characteristics of Ancestrolatry.*

If I had to characterise Thonga (and I may also add Bantu) ancestrolatry, I would say :

It is a *spiritualistic* religion, in this sense that no idols are adored ; there being neither idolatry nor fetichism in it. Spirits and spirits alone are worshipped.

It is an *animistic* religion, as defined in the preceding chapter, the categories of spirit gods being numerous, and these spirits being worshipped in order to stand high in their favour, and propitiated when they are angry.

It is a *particularistic family* religion, each family having its own particular gods. One also sees in it the beginnings of a *national particularistic* religion (the great mhamba).

It is a *social* religion, its enactments aiming at keeping alive and strengthening the hierarchy, which is the main feature of the social order.

It is an *unsacerdotal* religion, there being no sacerdotal order, but, at the same time the priesthood of the elder brother is strictly enforced.

It is a *non-moral* religion, by which I do not mean that it is *immoral*, i. e. opposed to the laws of morality, but that it has no, or at least very little, connection with the moral conduct of the individual. It has no moral enactments except those which insure the observance of the hierarchical order in the family. It neither promises reward nor threatens punishment after death.

Consequently it is purely *eudemonistic*, the religious acts having as their sole aim the material benefits in connection with terrestrial life, e. g. abundance, health, peace, and good sleep !

It is *unphilosophical*, that is to say, it does not attempt to answer the great problems about the origin and the aim of the world, and human

existence. These questions of causality and finality are absolutely beyond its horizon.

It is essentially *ritualistic*, and leaves very little place for true religious feelings. Adoration is practically non-existent. However, elements of *personal religion* are not altogether wanting. Some expressions in the liturgical prayers reveal humility and trust, e. g. "Death doth not come to the man who is prayed for, but only to the one who trusts in his own strength" (p. 366); thankfulness for dangers which have been avoided is sometimes expressed in a spontaneous and genuine way; and may not also the sacrifice of bitterness (p. 364) be actuated by a real and touching feeling of dependency; the old formula of invocation and the sacramental word *tsu,* now inexplicable, seem to show that there was, even in former times, such a thing as *self dedication*, and some aspiration towards a real communion between the worshipper and his gods.

Animism is generally spoken of as a *religion of fear*. Applied to Thonga ancestrolatry, this statement would be an exaggeration. There is indeed no deep love for the ancestor-gods in the hearts of the Thonga; how could it be so when these "psikwembu" are so jeaous, and show so little love themselves? But there is no perpetual fear. The attitude is rather that of *indifference*. Natives ask for one thing only: that they may live in peace, and that their gods may interfere with them as little as possible.

B. THE CONCEPTION OF HEAVEN

When studying the classic tragedies of Greece, and more especially those of Aeschylus and Sophocles, one is led to the conclusion that the gods of Olympus, in whom may be recognised, more or less distinctly, the personification of the forces of Nature, or heroes glorified by apotheosis, were not the only beings in which that intelligent people believed, nor the sole objects of their veneration. Higher than Olympus, and dwelling in the more remote heavens, a mysterious divinity looks down upon mankind, a divinity wiser and nobler than the capricious Zeus, or the voluptuous Artemis; sometimes it is called Nemesis, the avenger, inexorable fate, and sometimes it is a god more human and more moral in character. But

this Supreme Being is vaguely conceived, and its form is, as it were, closely veiled. In the religion of the Thonga one meets with a similar phenomenon. Above the gods which the ordinary people know, worship, and call by name, there exists a power, which for the majority remains ill defined and which they express by the word *Heaven* (Tilo). This word *Tilo*, which, in the ordinary language, is used to designate the blue sky (p. 28), contains a far deeper and more comprenhensive meaning. I shall not attempt to throw a full light on these conceptions, which are so dim in the Native mind. But the reader, who studies carefully the facts and customs, which I am just about to describe, will certainly be convinced that there really exist two parallel series of religious ideas in the Thonga Religion. We have already dealt with those which first manifest themselves to the observer. Let us now consider the others: they are not less interesting, nor less picturesque; they are indeed perhaps deeper than the common Ancestrolatry. This principle of belief is in such an embryonic state that it very easily escapes observation. As already pointed out, it is a vein, a reef of gold, which has been discovered through some fortuitous circumstance, and must be worked with great care.

I. *The definition of Heaven.*

Tilo is a grand word; it comes from the same root as Zulu, the honoured name of a great and powerful tribe.

"Before you came to teach us that there is an All-Good Being, a Father in Heaven, we already knew there was a Heaven, but did now know there was anyone in it." Such was the declaration of one of the most intelligent women of our congregation at Lourenço Marques, who was also the best acquainted with all the ancient Ba-Ronga customs. Timotheo Mandlati said to me, on the other hand: "Our fathers all believed that life existed in Heaven" (butomi byi kone tilwen). It is quite certain that, in the idea of the Thonga, as well as in that of

many other tribes, Heaven was a *place*; a place much to be desired, where was to be found that which is so seldom met with on earth, namely rest. Hence a song, which one finds under very similar guise amongst the Zulus, (1) and even amongst the Ba-Suto, which runs thus:

(Solo) Bukali bya ngoti!
(Tutti) Nha ndji yahliya ngoti, ndji ya Tilwen!
Ndji ya kuma ku wisa!
(Solo) What a rare thing is string!
(Tutti) Oh! how I should love to plait a string, and go up to Heaven, I would go there to find rest!

An old refrain which has come down through the ages, and has in no wise been inspired by the Christian religion: it is pure, authentic Bantu! Thus the warriors, when threatening their adversaries, and hurling defiance from one troop to another, say: "Make ready your string, and climb up to Heaven, there is no place for you here, below. Here you will find nothing but misfortune" (I. p. 447).

Thonga, however, never declare as a belief that men go to Heaven after death. They become "psikwembu", and we have already seen where is their abode. Nevertheless Viguet told me the story of a Hlengwe, whom he knew in times long gone by, in the Bilen country, who used to address the people in mysterious tones as follows:

Though you eat plenty of fat and of honey, and drink plenty of beer, the day will come when you will say "Huku-huku" (fall on your back, i. e. die); people will say "Woo" (i. e. mourn you), and ask you: "Where are you going?" Then answer: "I am going to Ngundju-ya-mapsele, the Source-of-Grace, to the place where the oxen are herded by vultures (because there is no hatred, and no death there), where the mosquito is killed with a stick (because everything is so flourishing and so big there), where the fowl dies from fat (because there is no disease, nor dearth in that blessed land) — to Heaven!"

(1) "Who could make a cord, whereby to go to Heaven?" Such is the Zulu version given by Callaway

This Hlengwe had either heard these words in his home or had invented them himself.

But Tilo is something more than a place. It is a *power* which acts and manifests itself in various ways. It is sometimes called *hosi*, a lord. But this power is generally regarded as something entirely impersonal. Thonga appear to think that Heaven regulates and presides over certain great cosmic phenomena to which men must, willingly or unwillingly, submit, more especially those of a sudden and unexpected nature, by which I mean above all: rain, storms, and, in human affairs, death, convulsions and the birth of twins. From this idea emanate certain very characteristic customs, which I will briefly proceed to describe.

It is Heaven that afflicts children with those terrible and mysterious *convulsions*, which carry them off without their having been ill, so to speak... "He is ill from Heaven" — "A ni Tilo", said an old Native doctor to me in a low tone, referring to a case of this description. So Heaven is the great nombo (infantile disease, (I. p. 46), whilst diarrhea is the small nombo.

But more than this, *it is Heaven which kills and which makes alive.* "Hence the frequent expression :" "Heaven loved him", when someone has escaped some deadly danger, or is particularly prosperous, and "Heaven hated him", when he has been very unfortunate, or has died.

The same idea is expressed in the following dirge.

Wa hi kanganyisa, Tshabane!
Hi yingeli Tilo, dji ku dja buya nininini!
Hi kumi babanuna babiri, ba famba, ba hlahluba Tilo.
Wa nga yingela psa bambe, u ta yingela ni psa ku!

You deceive us, Tshabane!
We have heard Heaven thunder... The roaring will soon come.
We have seen two men who were going to throw the bones with reference to Heaven...
Doubtless you have heard tell of the misfortunes of others :
You will hear them talking of your own!

Enigmatic words, but, with the help of the Natives, I have unravelled their meaning: — You are deceiving us, Tshabane,

you who are trying to reassure us. We have heard Heaven. A storm has burst, a sudden downpour, a flash of lightning; Heaven struck! It killed some one. Two men passed by, terrified; they went to consult the bones, to try and find means to ward off these strokes of Heaven. Useless! If you have seen the sorrow of those who mourn, do not imagine that you will escape. It will soon be your turn!

Another song which contains a similar allusion to Heaven as the power which kills, has already been quoted when describing the customs of widowhood (I. p. 205). "What shall we say to thee! King!"

The tale of "the Road to Heaven" (See Les Chants et Les Contes des Ba-Ronga, p. 237) is also very significant in this respect. It tells the story of a young girl, who having broken her jar, and fearing a scolding from her mother, *climbs up her string* and goes to Heaven. (Always the same idea of shelter from all evils.)(1) There she finds a village; a child is given to her, because she is so sweet and obedient. Her sister tries to do the same thing. But she is cross and wicked. Heaven explodes (baleka), kills her (by lightning), and her bones are blown right to her parents' house. In the tale of the Adventures of Bonawasi (Ch. & C. p. 295) Heaven intervenes to endow a young Native with peculiar wisdom, by means of which he gets the better of the Governor of the town. Possibly some idea of the God of the Europeans may have found its way into the composition of this tale, in which may be recognized certain traces of foreign influence. But this is assuredly not the case in respect to the story of Ñwahungukuri, which I have published in Les Ba-Ronga, p. 312, and in which Heaven is credited with the full knowledge of a hidden crime committed by a murderer. This idea is so far from being an innovation due to European influence that thoughtful Natives all agree that, in

(1) The mention of this string is perhaps due to a common tradition amongst other African tribes. According to the Ba-Rotse, Leza, God, who dwelt on earth, went up to Heaven one day by a spider's web. Several human beings tried to climb the same way, but fell and did not succeed. (Comp. A. Jalla. Foi et Vie. Oct. 1910).

former times, it was more usual to attribute death to the power of Heaven. It was common saying " Heaven has fallen (ku we Tilo) on such and such a village. " Nowadays it is rather the gods, or the wizards, who are believed to cause death.

But this belief in Heaven has not only inspired these sayings, songs, and tales ; it has also given rise to curious customs, the description of which will throw more light on this conception of the Thonga. Their existence proves that we have not to deal with the "animatic" invention of some person gifted with a vivid imagination (p. 344), but with a real belief of the tribe.

II. *Customs connected with the Conception of Heaven.*

1) Heaven, Twins and Rain

This power, which causes lightning and death, also presides, in a very special way, at the *birth of twins*, to such an extent that the mother is called by the name of " Tilo ", — " Heaven ", — and the children " Bana ba Tilo ", — " Children of Heaven ". (1) Now the arrival of two or three babies at the same time is looked upon, by the Thonga, as a great misfortune, a defilement in respect of which very special rites must be performed. I give the details of these rites as practised in the Zihlahla, Nondwane, and Nkuna clans, as they were described to me by Tobane, Mboza, Mankhelu, etc.

Twins (hahla, or bandjwa, dji-ma) are now both allowed to live. But in former times, one of them, the one who looked the feebler, was always put to death, being left to die of starvation, or strangled by a rope. He was buried in a broken pot, like other infants (I. p. 166), just below the surface of the ground, a hole being left for the air to enter, so that the " spirit (moya) may go out ", in order that, for the mother also, the

(1) In our school at Lourenço Marques there was a charming young girl, who was named Ñwana-wa-Tilo, daughter of Heaven, because she had a twin brother.

" spirit may get out ", may be able to fly outside and may not close (the passages), this being a primary condition for her to have other children. (1)

But even the death of one of the twins is not considered sufficient to remove the curse. Directly after birth a particular doctor is sent for, who keeps the drugs needed in such a case. Shimhuntana and Manganyele were the medicine-men who were capable of dealing with the twin defilement in the district of Lebombo, and Ñwashihuhuri of the Matimela family in the Zihlahla clan. They were held only to be surpassed by the medicine-man who treated cases of leprosy. The mother has to leave the village immediately, and they build for her a miserable little hut behind the others, where she goes to live with her twins. Her former hut is burnt with all her possessions.

In *Zihlahla*, all the women assemble that same day and start out in all directions, North, South, East and West to draw water in old calabashes from all the lakes and wells of the neighbourhood. They go skipping along, and singing

" Mbelele ! Mbelele ! Let rain fall "

This is the Mbelele song.

Then they return. The mother is seated with her two babes in her arms. They throw the water over her, intoning all the while the same monotonous refrain. This ceremony is to begin the removal of the " misfortune of twin birth which is a death ", (khombo dja lihahla, dji nga lifu). To complete the purification the magician gives to the father and mother a certain drug, which is kept in the Matimela family. The mother will put some of this in the little milombyana calabash, the diet drink of newly born infants.

In *Khosen* the purification is performed by the medicine-man alone (See Les Ba-Ronga, p. 414). He pours his drugs into one of the pots brought by the women, adds to them the psanyi

(1) Even if a child dies, aged ten days or more, if buried in the ground its grave must have very little depth ; for if it were buried too deep the mother would have no other children.

of the goat sacrificed for the occasion, and pours all the contents on the shoulders of the mother, who holds the babes in her lap. After which he pours from some other pot, which contains pure water, and the woman conscientiously washes herself and her children all the while. Before her purification no inhabitant of the village is allowed to eat anything, and the following day it is taboo to work in the fields, for this would prevent the rain from falling

Amongst the *Nkuna*, the mother of twins sits at the entrance of the hut, and the drug is poured over the roof above the doorway; it leaks through the thatch on to her, and thus both the mother and the hut are purified at the same time.

This preliminary purification being thus accomplished the woman goes to live in "her shelter", outside the village. She is absolutely shut off from all the other inhabitants. She has her own pots, axe, mortar, pestle, and does all her own cooking. Nobody even pays her a visit, and people only speak to her from a distance. Her children see no one but her. To each is allotted one breast, always the same one. To help her in the nursing of twins the mother must "buy" a girl to whom the care of one of the children is committed. This is a law. It is taboo for a girl, even should she be the elder sister, to "play" with a twin. The payment of £ 1 or ten shillings removes this taboo and the defilement (shisila) connected with it.

Women fear that, if they touch anything belonging to the mother of twins, if they smear themselves with her provision of fat, or if the defiled one smears herself with their fat, they will also fall into the dreadful misfortune of giving birth to twins. For that reason it is taboo for a mother of twins to draw water anywhere. She must select a spot and always go there. When coming back from drawing water, she must take care of the little wreath of grass, which she wears on her head to help her balance her pot: it must not be thrown away with those used by other women, for fear that they also should become contaminated (tekela).

All these regulations clearly show that, for the time being, the

mother of twins like the widow (I. p. 197) is considered outside the pale of society. But her defilement is worse than that of the widow; so, in order to be purified from it, the rite of *lahla khombo* (cast away the malediction) through which she must pass is much more trying. According to Mboza she must " deceive " four men one after the other, in the bush, all of whom will die. She hears that so and so says *djoo-djoo*, viz, becomes livid, that his body swells, that he is dead! She knows the reason. They have taken her defilement! Perhaps the fourth does not die, but only becomes consumptive. These men have been designated to her by the divinatory bones. Each time she succeeds in performing the purification ceremony, described in I. p. 202, she informs her medicine-man who " prepares for her a vapour bath ". Afterwards, she goes to reside at her parents' house, has relations with a lover, and gives birth to another child. Then her purification is complete, and her husband goes with 10/- to take her, and bring her home. The lover completed the removal of the " buhahla " i. e. the condition in which a mother of twins is. He has washed her (hlantsa). A new hut will be built for her, furnished with new utensils, and the ordinary family life will begin over again.

As regards the twins themselves, they do not pass through the ceremony of presentation to the moon (I. p. 51) as other children. They are weaned earlier; immediately after the reappearance of the menses the mother begins her *lahla khombo*, which at the same time is a *lumula*, a weaning of the children. They are then fed with goat's milk.

Twins are not liked by other people. They are considered as bad characters. When the little ones begin to crawl, and chance to go towards the other huts, people throw cinders at them and drive them away, saying: " These are children of Heaven. Be off! You annoy us! " If any ordinary child has a particularly bad disposition, one often says: " You are naughty! You are just like a twin! " — " Hahla dja karata " — " Twins are troublesome " is another common saying; and if a child is really exceptionally difficult to deal with, people say:

" It is a twin ! You cannot do anything with him! (A dji koteki !) "

Special precautions are taken in respect to twins, when they pay a visit for the purposes of mourning. One of the grave-diggers meets them at the entrance of the village and says : " Do not fear, Children of Heaven ". He then puts some ashes on their heads, and their fontanelles. This is done because twins are feeble (ma ni bushapu) and the defilement might affect them more than other children. Let them therefore be protected by smearing the middle of the head, and the " extremity of the tree of life ", viz., the fontanelle, with a preventive. The mother also undergoes a similar treatment. She must prostrate herself near the hut of deceased, at the place where the wall has been pierced to make an exit for the corpse. Then the grave-digger brings some live embers in a broken pot, pours a little water on them, dips his fingers into the water; he then presses both his hands against the woman's belly and brings them round her waist, pressing then all the while against the skin, until they meet on the spine : thus she is " cured inside " (dahiwa ndjen) ; this will prevent her from suffering from internal troubles, to which she, having given birth to Tilo, Heaven, is particulary liable. (Comp. I. p. 152)

This rapid description of the customs connected with twins, in most of the Thonga clans, shows that their explanation is twofold : 1) The birth of twins is a death, consequently a defilement, indeed the worst of all defilements. Hence the *purificatory rites* which bear the character of *passage rites :* the mother is secluded and passes through a period of isolation, after which she is again admitted to society after a painful " casting away of her misfortune ". 2) But the cause of the defilement is not an ordinary death, but Heaven. *She is Heaven ;* she is said to have *made Heaven* (a hambi Tilo), to have *carried Heaven* (a rwi Tilo), to have *ascended to Heaven* (a khandjiyi Tilo). This connection established between her and Heaven is clearly seen in the *rain customs* previously described. Notice that the day following the birth of twins is a shimusi, i. e. a day of rest. Nobody tills the ground, fearing

that it would prevent the rain from falling. When the *mbelele* takes place in Nondwane and Zihlahla (p. 295), the half naked women, who are sent to clean the wells, take with them a mother of twins. This is no doubt in order to show them where the graves of twins are. But there is also another reason. In the sacred wood of Libombo, there is a hole where the woman is put, and her sisters pour on her the water which they have drawn from all the wells, till the hole is half full, and the water comes up to her breasts. This will make the rain fall. Why ? No doubt it is because the woman of Heaven being wet, Heaven itself will be wet. Spoon did not give this explanation himself, but, when I suggested it to him, he accepted it readily. For the same reason the graves of twins are watered. In certain cases water is poured on the graves of the ancestors also, because rain is attributed both to them and to Heaven, and in accordance with the principle that " like acts on like ", this watering the graves is meant to induce either Heaven or the ancestor-gods to make rain fall. Hence again the precaution taken of burying twins in damp places, and of exhuming them in times of drought if they have been buried in dry ground (p. 296) (1).

The connection between twins and Heaven, so clearly to be seen in these customs, again appears in respect to thunderstorms, another manifestation of Heaven as we shall see. When lightning threatens a village, people say to a twin: " Help us ! You are a Child of Heaven ! You can therefore cope with Heaven (mi kota Tilo), it will hear you when you speak ". So the child goes out of the hut and prays to

(1) In other clans this law is extended to prematurely born children, though they are not twins, and even to children who have not had the cotton string tied round their waist or have cut their upper teeth first. On the other hand, among the Nkuna, it does not seem that any special relation is established between twins and Heaven. These differences may be explained by the fact that all these abnormal cases were ascribed to Heaven in former times, and the connection has been preserved in the various clans in respect to one or the other of these categories. Note that, in the song of the widows (I. p. 205) the king Heaven seems to have caused the death of the husband; this is another proof that Heaven was formerly considered the most frequent cause of death.

Heaven in the following words : " Go away ! Do not annoy us ! We are afraid. Go and roar far away. " When the thunderstorm has ended, the child is thanked. (1) His mother can also help in the same way, for has she not ascended to Heaven ? " She can speak with it, she is at it (or in it) — a li ku (djone) ". (Spoon).

Customs regarding twins vary from one clan to another. If in one tribe they are put to death, in others their advent is considered an event of great happiness. This is the case in *Tembe and Maputju*, where it is said that women wish for twins, and, if certain mothers have had that good fortune, others ask them for some of the fat with which they smeared their bodies, hoping by the use of the same ointment to obtain a like happy result. The hut is never burnt. The mother gives birth to the twins behind the hut (fukwen, I. p. 35). When it is time for her to re-enter her domicile, a hole is made in the wall at the back. The husband is excluded from the hut till the day of presentation to the moon (a ceremony, which is not omitted for twins, in these clans). When he is again admitted, his wife hits his legs with a stick, in order " to cure him " (ku mu daha). Hitting, is often one of the rites of aggregation. (See Van Gennep, Rites de Passage, p. 55). Let us remember that the Tembe clan is of Northern origin (I. p. 21) and has kept some customs which are different from those of the other Thonga (2).

(1) Mrs. Junod, who was for years a missionary amongst the Fañ or Pahouin of the French Congo, told me that, one day, after a tornado, the rainbow suddenly appeared in the sky. One of her female pupils at once ran to her, and hid her face in her schoolmistress'lap. Having asked the reason of this fear, the teacher was told that this girl was a twin and twins dare not look at the rainbow. So the connection between Heaven and twins also exists in this tribe of Western Africa.

(2) Amongst *the Herero* a multiple birth is the happiest event which could possibly happen ! The Rev. E. Dannert published in the *Capetown Folklore Journal* an account of the customs practised on such occasions by the Natives of this tribe, which occupies the Western side of Southern Africa, on about the same latitude as the Thonga. The father and mother are condemned to complete silence, under penalty of bringing a curse on those who speak to them. All the members of the tribe are convened and bring their cattle with them. The twins' family has to appear before the whole assembly, and are received with lamentations. Every individual must present himself to the

2) Heaven and the " Nunu "

The following is a very extraordinary custom, and one which, in many respects, greatly resembles those I have already described. There is to be found, on the shores of Delagoa Bay, a small Coleoptera, belonging to the Alcides genus of the Cucurlionidæ family. It has a proboscis shaped mouth, a very hard carapace of half a centimetre in length, brown, and marked on each elytron with two longitudinal white bands. The Blacks call it the *nunu*. It is a scourge for the fields of beans and maize (much as the cockchafers are with us). In December or January, when these insects begin to swarm, the chief men of the country order the diviners to throw the bones, and send the women to pick the " nunu " off the bean stalks. They gather them in " sala " shells. Then they choose (probably by casting lots) *a woman who has given birth to twins*. One of her daughters, who is one of the twins, is told to throw all the " catch " of insects into the neighbouring lake. She is accompanied by a woman of mature age, and, without speaking a word, must go straight to the lake in question. Behind her marches the whole crowd of women, arms, waists and heads covered with grass, carrying branches of the big leaved

parents, and make them a gift of beads, or other ornaments, in return for which the father and mother purify them by means of a certain powder. After this the father has the right of going from village to village, and claiming an ox from each one, as a kind of ransom. He becomes quite a rich man. This is the *kunga rite* which we have also met with amongst the Thonga in connection with the " destitute (bowumba) " women i. e. women who have given birth to a child after having lost many (I. p. 190). How can the diversity between the customs of the Herero, and those of most of the Thonga be explained ? No doubt by this vague mysterious notion of Heaven, which hovers above the religious conceptions of these tribes and originated all these rites This celestial power, when it manifests itself, stupefies the Natives, for it causes " a death ", entails a curse. With the Thonga it is the mother and the children who are the objects of this malediction, hence the purifying ceremonies imposed upon them. With the Herero, it is the whole tribe, who are affected. The family, into which the twins are born has been distinguished and honoured by this heavenly visitation, and itself collects the fines which all must pay to regain the celestial favour!

manioc, which they wave from side to side, and singing the following song, which has been composed for this occasion :

Nunu, muka ! Hi da mabele !
Nunu, go away ! That we may eat bread !

The twin throws her little calabash into the water without turning round (for she is not allowed to look behind). Then the savage yells are heard louder than ever, and the women sing their impure songs (ta ku ruketela), to which they would never dare give voice on ordinary occasions, and which are reserved for these ceremonies : rain seeking and " nunu " hunting.

On that day, as during the mbelele, woe to the man who walks along the paths ! He is pitilessly tackled by these viragos, who push him to one side, or even maltreat him, and none of his fellows will go to his assistance. They all keep out of the way, for they well know what is in store for them, should they meet the savage crowd ! So they mostly stay quietly at home in their huts !

The " nunu " is not always thrown into the water. Sometimes, to get rid of the plague, or rather to conjure it away, they start out in a band, armed with sticks, to throw these destructive insects on to neighbouring lands. It would seem that the men are mixed up in these underhand dodges, for it is said that this way, of handing over the " nunu " to neighbours, often leads to pitched battles, in which sticks are wielded to some purpose, and blows rain thick and heavy ! The people of Rikatla, citizens of Nondwane, used to make a present of their pseudo-cockchafers to the inhabitants of the district of Makunyule, belonging to the Mabota clan. But the true way of conjuring away the " Nunu " is to drown them in the lake, and this custom, in common with the preceding ones, certainly bears some relation to the notion of Heaven : the appearance of these pests being caused by that mysterious power, which presides over all unaccountable and inevitable phenomena of the atmosphere and of the life of the fields, or of human existence.

We have seen the two sets of religious customs playing their part in a parallel manner in the rites of rain-making. A similar coincidence may be noticed here. The removal of the "nunu", a rite which has originated from the conception of Heaven, corresponds to the sacrifice of the chief in the Maluleke country, when he gathers his sons to pray to his ancestor-gods for the destruction of the vermin (psidi) which eat the mealies and endanger the harvest (p. 372).

3) Heaven, Storms and Robbers

The most characteristic manifestation of Heaven is in the storm. According to the statement of the credulous Natives, after the women have finished cleaning the wells, and have watered the graves of twins, clouds appear, a whirlwind arises, and "Heaven begins to thunder" — "Tilo dji djuma". — I have already described Thonga ideas about thunder and the lightning bird (p. 290), and the powerful charm made from the flesh, feathers and urine of this marvellous creature! There is still another use made of this extraordinary drug. It is a splendid aid in *tracing thieves*! The magician, who possesses this powder of Heaven, (Ñwagwalen of Shikhabele in the Mabota clan), when called upon to point out the thief, acts in the following way:

Suppose some one finds that some valuable article has disappeared from his hut, he says to his near relatives, to those whom he suspects of having committed the larceny: "Take care! If you don't confess, we will go to Ñwagwalen, who lives at Shikhabele!" This threat may possibly be sufficient to elicit an avowal. If not, the individual who has been wronged goes to the diviner, and asks his assistance; the latter takes his "bag of tricks", his drugs, and his big black stick, i. e., the stick which he had when he dug the earth and found the urine of the bird, or the bird itself. A notch has been made in the stick, to show the depth of the hole in which he has discovered Heaven. Carrying these charms, he goes to find the chief. An audience being granted, he cries aloud: "O Chief! a

theft has been committed ! Now, no one ought ever to rob me. What shall I do ! " Then the Chief assembles his subjects and invites the guilty one to confess. If all deny it, Ñwagwalen starts off, with all his apparatus, for the place where the theft was committed, and " treats it medicinally " (a dahela mbango). He spreads out his drugs, raises his stick in the air, and addresses Heaven as follows :

> We, Tilo, hi wene u ka ni mahlu, u bonaka busiku ni nhlekanhi !
> Ba tekile psa nga, ba kaneta ! Tana, u ba komba, ba psha !
> Oh Heaven, it is thou who hast eyes which see as well by night as by day...
> They have stolen my goods, and they deny it ! Come and discover them ; may they be consumed !

Then the clouds begin to gather, and, towards evening, the storm breaks. Lightning strikes the thief in his hut, and causes the stolen articles to reappear. — " I saw this happen at Hoñwana " declared Spoon " but, of late years such occurrences have been less frequent ".

According to Camilla the guilty person is sometimes punished by a terrible attack of vermin, of which he is unable to rid himself ; or he is confronted with several palm leaves, which, by a kind of divine judgment, turn into snakes, if he be truly guilty of having stolen the missing property.

The intervention of Heaven in the matter of detecting thieves is also an accepted fact in Khosen. My colleague, Rev. Grandjean, told me of the following significant custom: When it storms, those who have missed any belongings go and stand at the door of the hut of the suspected thief, and it is quite possible that the inmate terrified by thunder, may throw the stolen articles outside.

One might conclude, from these perfectly authenticated customs, that the Natives attribute to Heaven the power of *omniscience*, but more especially in respect to the detection of theft. The basket of bones is never consulted with that intent.

4) Heaven and the Balungwana.

In 1894, as previously stated, grasshoppers, which had not been seen for some fifty years, made their appearance on the shores of Delagoa Bay, and also in Natal and the Transvaal. The popular imagination was, naturally, greatly stirred by this unusual phenomenon, which was, at first, greeted with smiles and astonishment, but which, later on, was the cause of endless lamentation. I was, one day, walking up the hill of Lourenço Marques with an old man, the counsellor of one of the sub-chiefs of Tembe, a thoughtful and intelligent individual, who said to me, with great earnestness, in a low voice, as if referring to some important event: "Haven't you heard that in Maputju, two dwarfs (psimhu-nwanyana) fell from Heaven: a little man and a little woman. They came to say to the people: "Do not kill the grasshoppers! They belong to us!" This counsellor only repeated what everybody thought and was saying in all the native villages: these grasshoppers, arriving unexpectedly from on high, were a manifestation of Heaven, just as the lightning, rain, twins, or the nunu, and these celestial beings had come to announce it to men.

But the belief in the existence of *special personages* in Heaven did not originate in connection with these terribly destructive insects. The idea had been familiar, for a long time past, to the Ronga, and probably to all the Thonga. These personages were not only designated as dwarfs, but also as balungwana (p. 330). They are said to fall from Heaven at the time of the great rains. Thus, Timoteo Mandlati told me people had seen some of them appear, a long time ago, in the Nkuna country, and that they had gone back to heaven in a cloud: they live in celestial space, and when it thunders without rain falling, the Nkuna say: " Balungwana ba tlanga henhla " — " The balungwana are at play up there ". Or, it is they who are singing in heaven, when there is a prolonged roar of thunder, saying : " wuwu-wuwu ! "

When some one passes along the road, they dispute up there,

as to who he may be. One says: "It is so and so", and the others contradict. Then they spit on the traveller, who is quite astonished to see some saliva on his hand. He mistakes it for rain, and looks up to the sky to see where the rain is coming from. The balungwana then have the chance to see his face, and the one who had rightly guessed says to the others: "You see! I was right."

In Bilen I heard of a man, who prevented children from picking the beautiful red flowers of Tecoma capensis, telling them that the balungwana wanted them for dresses. That same individual believed these little men would bring oxen to him.

The Ronga say that a little man fell on the hill of Lourenço Marques, near the house of Sithini, the son of Mashaken, just before the famous war between Mozila and Mawewe (I. p. 27), the rival claimants to the kingdom of Gaza, and that the dwarf came as a presage of the troubles which were to follow. "Lots of folk saw him" said Charlie in 1895; (he was then a man of some forty years of age). "We were too young to be allowed to look at him; the Whites took him and carried him off to Mozambique". — Heaven is therefore inhabited. This is generally admitted, but this idea, from all that one can gather, is very vague.

C. CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THONGA RELIGION

I. *The Origin of the Conception of Heaven.*

Ancestrolatry forms a clear, well-defined religion, with its theology (i. e., the ideas as regards the psikwembu), its sacrifices, and its prayers. The dim, mysterious ideas about Heaven, incorporated in or rather hidden behind some of the most extraordinary rites of the tribe, bear a very different character. There is something incoherent, vague and unexpected in them, and it seems that, bearing an essentially deistic character, attended with no proper worship, they might as well be absent from the horizon of the Thonga mind.

However, when we study other Bantu tribes, we come to exactly

the opposite conclusion, i. e., that it would be indeed strange, if no religious ideas of this kind were found amongst our tribe. In fact, this occurrence of a double set of religious ideas is universal amongst Bantu. They all believe in a kind of Supreme Being, an All Father, who bears many different names, *Nzame* amongst the Fañ and a great number of West African tribes, *Nyambe* amongst the Ba-Rotsi, *Leza* in some Zambezi and Rhodesian districts, *Mulungu* amongst fifteen East African tribes, (1) *Nkulunkulu* in Zululand, *Nungungulu* round Inhambane, and *Mudimo* amongst the Ba-Suto, etc., etc. The Thonga *Tilo* is, most likely, one of these names. The word probably comes from the root *ulu*, high, elevated, and *ilu*, heaven, which the R. P. Sacleux has found with that significance amongst Central or West African tribes. (*Mulu*, amongst the Bemba ; *Liulu*, in Kimbundu ; *Diulu*, in Luba ; *Wilu*, in Luyi ; *Egulu* in Ganda ; *Idjulu*, amongst the Thonga of Zambezi, etc.). This root, with the personal prefix, has given birth to the term *Mugulu*, designating God in Tabwa and *Mukuru* in Herero. It may be that Mukuru is rather related to the *Unkulunkulu* of the Zulus, the Great One. (See Mgr. Le Roy, " La Religion des Primitifs ", 1909, p. 498).

In the South African tribes, however, the conception of the Supreme Being is not nearly so precise as in most parts of Central Africa. The Thonga Tilo, although sometimes implored, is hardly a being, but seems rather to be a personification of Nature. Is this the original conception regarding the Supreme Being, or is it, on the contrary, a transformation of it? I abstained, in " Les Ba-Ronga ", from expressing any definite opinion on this point. A further study has now led me to believe that the latter conclusion is the more probable, and that the ideas about Heaven were clearer in former times. This is, at any rate, also the conviction of elderly intelligent Natives, who are able to remember the former ideas held by the tribe. They say : " As regards death, people commonly affirm now that it is caused by witchcraft, whilst formerly they attributed it to the agency of Heaven. " Let us also notice the name of the dwarfs, who are believed to inhabit Heaven, the *balungwana*. This word is a diminutive of *Mulungu*, *balungu*, by which are designated, amongst the Zulus and Thonga, White people of every description, Europeans or Asiatics. Could the inhabitants of Heaven have been called " balungwana ", on account of their resemblance to the Whites ? It would

(1) Comp. J. Torrend's, *Comparative Grammar of the S. A. Bantu Languages*, p. 68,

hardly seem probable, for the name of, and the ideas connected with, the balungwana were in existence long before White people were generally known, or had settled in the country. It is much more reasonable to suppose that the name of these mythical beings, as also that by which the Whites are designated, is a derivative of some other pre-existent term ; and what term should it be if not the famous vocable "Mulungu", which stands for God, the One Supreme God, in so many of the Bantu dialects of East Africa, from Lake Victoria Nyanza to the Zambesi, to Senna and Quilimane ? I should be inclined to think that the tribes in the neighbourhood of Delagoa were also acquainted with this name, which is so widely known, and that it has, in the course of centuries, disappeared from their theology, only leaving, as a last trace, the term balungwana, applied to the heavenly beings who occasionally descend to earth, and balungu, designating that superior race whose wisdom has always impressed the Blacks as supernatural. If this hypothesis were confirmed, we should have the right to conclude that the idea of Heaven, such as described in this chapter is the disfigured remnant of a higher and monotheistic conception, which the primitive Bantu held before their dispersion, and which evolved in various ways, amongst the different tribes.

II. *The Antiquity of Ancestrolatry.*

Ancestral Worship seems, on the other hand, to be a very, very ancient religion amongst mankind. There have been discovered quite recently sepulchres of prehistoric date, which seem to show that the funeral rites of the first races were very similar to those practised by the Bantu of the present day. In comparing the burial of Sokis (I. p. 134) with that of a human being of the Mousterian age, whose remains were recently discovered by Hauser in the celebrated "Abri du Moustier" (Dordogne) (1) I noticed the following resemblances :

1) In both cases, the corpse was treated with great, even affectionate care, protected against the earth, and provided with a pillow.

2) The legs and arms had been bent against the body, a custom which

(1) See my paper "Deux Enterrements à 20,000 ans de distance". Anthropos, 1900, I. v. Comp. also "L'homme préhistorique". January, 1909.

is widespread amongst primitive races, and which is directly due to the belief in an after-life.

3) The deceased is considered as sleeping : hence the pillow provided for him.

4) His after-life is believed to be an exact continuation of his existence on earth. Hence the fact that the articles which he was accustomed to use are put on, or inside, his grave, the mats, rugs, mug in one case, and silex or "coups de poing" in the other.

5) If the rites performed for Sokis may be explained by the hypothesis that he has become a shikwembu, a god endowed with divine powers, if they are already acts of worship, it is but reasonable to suppose that the same religious conceptions gave birth to the similar rites of the Mousterian Primitives. The Mousterian Age is one of the first periods of the Quaternary. Some palaeontologists believe it is anterior to the last glacial period, and think that the dwellers in la Dordogne lived 200,000, even 500,000 years ago ! They possessed a religion, and this religion was probably Ancestrolatry.

III. *The Relation between Ancestrolatry and the Conception of Heaven.*

The conclusion which might be drawn from the two preceding paragraphs is that both the Ancestral Worship and the Conception regarding a Supreme Being are of very ancient date, and the question naturally arises as to which is the older. I do not pretend here to be able to give an answer to this great problem, which probably cannot be solved in a purely scientific way. I intend merely adding the few following remarks.

1) When questioned as to the relative antiquity of their two sets of religious ideas, Thonga reply that they are unable to give an answer. Their conception of Heaven is so impersonal that they cannot draw any comparisons. Their neighbours, the Swazis and the Zulus, however, are very decided about this point. The Rev. W. Challis, in "The East and the West" of July, 1908, summarises their statements as follows :

"Long ago a great and noble Bantu king was in the habit of climbing a twin-peaked mountain at day break, there to intercede with

the Great Great One (Nkulunkulu) on behalf of his people. His son, who succeeded him, was afraid to draw near to the Great God whom his father worshipped, so he called upon the spirit of his father to intercede for him and his people before the Creator of all. Gradually each head of a house adopted this method of approaching God, until each family had its own ancestral spirits as mediators first, then merely as beings who brought good or bad luck, and who needed to be propitiated by sacrifice and constant flattery and attention. But God is not in their thoughts now; only a vague tradition among the old men survives as to the existence of the Great Great One."

The Zulus affirm, so Callaway says, that the same proceeding took place amongst their ancestors. This seems a phenomenon similar to the adoration of saints in medieval times, after a period when the religion had had a much purer and transcendental character.

2) A second fact, which points in the same direction, is the contrast which exists in the conception regarding the ancestral spirits. On the one hand they are but men, who may be insulted (as were often the saints to whom reference has just been made; take, for instance, the incident of the striking of the image of St Antony of Padua by a worshipper, because the saint had not helped him to recover some lost property); on the other hand they are endowed with the qualities of omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence in their relations with their descendants. It seems as if the idea of divinity, which was not originally connected with the spirits of the departed, had been in an awkward and merely external way applied to them.

3) It is wonderful to notice how easily the idea of the God of Christianity is accepted by the Bantu. They have almost no difficulty in believing that this is the real God to be worshipped. Livingstone long ago remarked this, and the truth of it has been confirmed by Miss Kingsley, for one, in regard to the Northern Bantus, and also by most of those who have endeavoured to win over these tribes to Christianity. It seems as if one were telling them an old story, with which they had been quite familiar but had now half forgotten. In regard to the Thonga I understand the psychological proceeding to be as follows: when they hear of the *Shikwembu*, who is *in Heaven*, there at once takes place in their minds a coalescence, a reunion of the two main characteristics of their two religions: their *shikwembu* is personal but not transcendental; their *Heaven* is transcendental but not personal. God, the real God who is preached to them, is both personal and transcendental: it is as if two different kinds of electricity suddenly came in contact with each other

in their minds and produced a flash of light... The result is definitive. The two ideas can no longer be kept apart. When the Native has adopted the living God of Christianity, he either understands Him more and more fully, and is able to find great joy and satisfaction of his soul in his new religion, or he abandons Him, and becomes godless, if he is unwilling to accept the morality of a true Christian life ; but he never returns to the Ancestrolatry, nor to his former deistic and naturalistic conceptions. This is another proof that the knowledge of the one and only God, who reigns over all, was indeed sleeping in his heart and conscience, no doubt as a result of the ancient monotheistic conceptions of the Bantu.

The evolution of mankind has been a long one ! Even if the Bantu had formerly had the idea of God, it would not go to prove anything as regards the first religion of humanity. This question is entirely out of the range of the present work, and even Science may perhaps never be able to answer it. I can therefore leave it out of consideration.

My last remark has shown the caducity of the Thonga religion. It is not able to stand before the advance of the higher revealed religions, Mohammedanism and Christianity. Hence the facility with which they are converted to one or other of these beliefs. This fact is of considerable importance in respect to the future of the tribe, and it will be necessary for us to consider it in our Conclusion.

CHAPTER III

Magic

Without pretending here to give definitions applicable to all the primitive races, well knowing how delicate is the subject, yet, I think I must first of all try to establish a distinction as clear as possible between Religion, Magic and Science, as they are represented amongst the South African tribes.

I call *Religious* all the rites, practices, conceptions, or feelings which presuppose the belief in personal or semi-personal spirits endowed with the attributes of Deity, and with which man tries to enter into relation, either to win their assistance or to avert their anger (offerings, prayers).

I call *Magic* all the rites, practices, and conceptions which aim at dealing with hostile, or neutral, or favourable influences, either impersonal forces of Nature, or living men acting as wizards, or personal spirits taking possession of their victims. I recognise two kinds of magic: "White magic" by which man tries to protect himself against these influences, or turn them to his advantage, and "Black magic" by which man attempts to make use of these forces against his fellows. The magic rites rest on well defined principles which may be called the axioms of Animism, or rather of Dynamism, for instance: like produces, cures or acts on like; the action of the part on the whole; etc.

I call *Scientific*, all the rites, practices, and conceptions which are inspired by a real observation of facts. I include in this category certain medical treatments, botanical and zoological notions; etc.

These different elements are intermingled in practice to such an extent that Religion is greatly disfigured by Magic. For instance, when the national priest "sacrifices" with the great mhamba, he prays to the ancestor-gods of the country: this is Religion; but he also brandishes the sacred object containing their nails and hair, to influence them: this is Magic. On the other hand Magic often admits religious elements (see Possessions), and the proper domain of Science is invaded on all sides by conceptions of a magical character. This

will be shown by the study of the four subjects which I include in the Chapter on Magic, viz.: Medical art, Posssessions, Witchcraft and Divination.

The confusion between these three domains also accounts for the composite character of those individuals who practise the medical, or magical art. The medicine-man (ñanga) is far from being a purely scientific man: he partakes more or less of the nature of the magician, and prays to the ancestors who transmitted their charms to him. The magician (mungoma) is sometimes a kind of priest when he undertakes to exorcise the spirits of possession. The diviner (wa bula), whose art is entirely based on magical conceptions, occasionally prays his ancestor-gods to help him in throwing the bones which he received from them. I am convinced that the three domains are essentially distinct, and that the Thonga vaguely perceive the distinction. But, indeed, they grade into each other with the greatest facility, and I will try to follow them, faithfully endeavouring not to alter their ideas, whilst trying to explain them intelligibly.

A. MEDICAL ART

The medicinal practices of the South African Bantu are very interesting from the ethnographical point of view, but their study has also a practical importance. In all civilised lands the medical profession is subjected to restrictions; the candidate must pass examinations showing that he is capable of treating his future patients. Nothing of this kind is met with amongst Thonga. The only qualification of the doctor is that he has inherited some recipes from one of his ancestors, and that he uses them with more or less success on voluntary patients. Should not steps be taken by Colonial Governments in order to stop, or at any rate to regularise, the action of the medicine-men?

A precise knowledge of their practices is necessary in order to come to a conclusion on this point. Missionaries have also a great interest in this study. They have all noticed how often their converts, when sickness overcomes them, abandon the Mission Station and run to their quacks, sometimes brusquely interrupting a treatment which had been prescribed to them by a fully trained medical missionary. The result is almost sure to be the eventual loss of their health and of their faith. Let us, therefore, try to understand the Native medical art and see how far we can trust its representatives.

I. *The Medicine-men.*

I came across a good many *ñanga* (yin-tin), the technical name given to Native physicians. They are all very proud of their knowledge and it must be remarked that this knowledge is mostly *hereditary*. Certain drugs have been tried, used for years, by a certain individual, who probably owed them to his father, or to another of his ancestors. Before his death he transmitted his art to his son, or to his uterine nephew, the one of his descendants who seemed to be "induced by his heart" (mbilu) to enter the profession. This being the case, medicine-men are very different from each other as regards their competence. Some only treat one complaint, or one category of patients, because they only know the medicine which applies to them. For instance *Eliashib*, one of our first converts, native of Khosen, had only one drug, the bark of a certain tree which possessed frightful purgative powers, and he prescribed it in any case, half killing those who came to him for treatment, and who had all the more confidence in the drug because it came from a distant land. Eliashib was hardly a ñanga. *Sam Ngwetsa*, my Rikatla neighbour, was a physician for infantile diseases only. He knew the milombyana prescription and how to biyeketa (I. p. 46), and people used to ask for his assistance as a specialist in this domain alone. We have seen that there is also a special doctor who boasts of being able to attend to the dangerous condition of the mother of twins, and another one who treats leprosy, this latter being regarded as the cleverest of all. *Spoon-Elias* had a more extensive knowledge of the popular "materia medica" than Sam, but he was still a beginner. His Nondwane colleague, *Kokolo*, was vastly superior: an individual in the prime of life, wearing the black crown which distinguishes the notables of the land. He belonged to an ancient family of doctors; his father Mankena and his grandfather Mahlahlana practised before him, and bequeathed to him the valuable legacy of their experience. Tobane, to whom I applied to put me in

touch with some really clever practitioners, said of this man: "Awa daha"- "He is one who succeeds in his cures!", adding with a look of profound respect: "It seems that even the Whites of Lourenço Marques consult him!" And Kokolo, without too much persuasion, shewed me his drugs, and went to "dig" for some for my special benefit. I had to pay him fairly generously, as the gentleman does not work for nothing, and it was with an evident consciousness of his talent and powers that he explained to me the uses of his medicines.

But the most distinguished medicine-man I ever met was the old *Mankhelu*, who may be considered as having been one of the masters of the profession in the Thonga tribe. "It is no play, what I am doing! I have beaten an ox (i. e. made a present of an ox) to my maternal uncle Hlomendhlen! I gave him even two oxen and he taught me his medical art! He led me everywhere, showing me all his drugs." So Mankhelu became a regular ñanga, over and above being a diviner, master in the art of throwing bones, a rain-maker, a counsellor, and general of the army. His whole family partook of his character, and helped him in his work. Every year, at the time of bukanye, the drugs had to be renewed. His wives went all over the bush to dig out the medicinal roots and to collect them in their *lihlelo* baskets (p. 106). On their return home the bones were consulted to find out who was to cut the roots in pieces (gemela). This having been done, they pounded them in their mortars; a portion of this material was dried outside, and reduced to powder without having been cooked; these were the *male medicines*; the other portion was roasted in pieces of broken pots, burnt until they were like charcoal, ground and made into a black powder: these were the *female medicines*. The whole village assembled and inhaled the smoke through reeds during the operation. A goat was killed and a sacrifice performed; the liquid contained in the *psanyi* (p. 376) was squeezed on the burning drugs to put them out; a little bukanye beer was also used for the same purpose. In the meantime Mankhelu said "*tsu*", and addressed this prayer to his gods, and especially to the ancestor who had taught him his science:

" You ! so and so ! Let these drugs of yours rise (pfuka, i. e. find new strength). Let people come from the Zulu, from Mosilekatse, from Mpfumu ! Let them think of our leaves (matluka, common name for drugs). Let them bring elephant tusks, marrriageable girls, etc. Let them dream of us ! "

This operation of renewing the drugs aims at giving them new strength. Mankhelu said. " We let our drugs *luma* for the new year; we raise our calabashes, so that the new season may be not too heavy for us... This will consolidate our home ; bad coughs will not attack us too severely. It will shut out the wind ; we will no longer be very sick, because these are new drugs. As regards the old ones, they have been contaminated (khuma) by the misfortunes of last year. They are mad (hungukile). A new rain falls ; let there be also new drugs, and we can undertake our journeys to sell our goods." So the ñanga removed a little of the old powder from each calabash ; he threw it on the path at a crossway ; then he washed them at the same spot : " Misfortune is thus thrown away. Passers-by will take it with them as it has been thrown out there by us." Then the new powder was added to the remainder of the old one which was " raised " by it.

In order to throw more light on the nature of Mankhelu's art, let me briefly mention *the roots* (rimetju), or *the leaves* (tluka, ri-ma), or, to use the great, the general name, *the drugs* (muri, mu-mi) which composed the marvellous powder of the calabashes. He was not a man of one drug. He pretended to be an universal physician : so he put together all kinds of drugs, being sure that, in this way, they would certainly act in any case brought to him. Here is the description given by him :

Ntjebe : the one by which we find the strength to trample on our enemies ; we trample also on the winds which spoil the mealies ; we drive out the bad cold (or wind) which has come to us and made us cough. (Notice the triple use of this drug).

Shikuku : the one which tramples on misfortune.

Mpoñwana wa burisi matuba-tubana: vanquisher of the enemy and of misfortune.

Shinano: the one which induces the enemies to sleep; you hang some leaves of it on yours hield and they are overcome by drowsiness, they do not see you coming toward them.

Nembe-nembe. By it you reach your enemy while he still sleeps and kill him before he can defend himself.

Mpetshu wa milomo: the one of the lips! It overcomes the curses and the assagais of the others!

Rihinga ra ndlela: a root found across the path; it helps you to go through, though others may want to hinder you in your way.

Shivunge: the one which attracts patients to the doctor.

Nandjiyane: the one which makes his words agreeable, so that patients will like them; (from ku nandjiya, to be agreeable).

Mvakazi, phuphuma ra matlhari: the one which is used to make the slayers vomit the main drug of the *tintjebe* (I. p.455).

Mbendjula: the one which strengthens all the other drugs.

These are the principal trees, or plants, used for the preparation of the powder. They must be *salted* by the addition of the *sea*, viz., of the medicines taken from the sea, and which Mankhelu uses to make the rain fall (p. 298).

The sexual character of the drugs is essential. The female ones are used principally for sprinkling the army and the assagais, the male for treating diseases. We find here again the law of opposition of sexes; the military domain is the male domain par excellence: it must be treated by means of female drugs. On the contrary, when slaughtering a she-goat, for the sacrifice, a little of the male drugs must be placed in its mouth and the weapon used to kill it must be smeared with the same, and vice-versa for the he-goat. "To act otherwise is taboo. All the ñanga do so".

There may be some really scientific elements in the Thonga medical art. Experiments have been made in using certain roots to cure certain diseases, and tradition has handed down some prescriptions from the fathers to their sons. Why should there not be effective cura-

tive properties in plants of their country just as there is in the Cinchona bark, or in Castor oil seeds? And why should they not have discovered them? However the Native ñanga is by no means a scientific man, and the best, the most renowned, are perhaps the least scientific. Those who treat only one complaint, and only know one drug, are perhaps those who most resemble real physicians. They act on the result of experiments. But the line between science and superstition is very soon crossed, and the medical art passes with the greatest ease into the domain of magic, all the more so as the difference between Science and Magic is not perceived. *Muri*, which means originally tree, plant, medicinal herb, is at the same time any means of producing any effect, natural or supernatural, on any influence, hostile or favourable, personal or impersonal. This is why the *ntjebe* shrub helps Mankhelu to attain three objects at the same time: cure a bad cough, protect the mealies and rout the enemy.

This mixed character of the medical art of the primitives, which is so evident in their medicine-men, will appear clearly when we continue our study.

II. *Medical practices.*

Surgical cases are treated in the worst way, any interference with a knife being considered absurd, if not culpable. (1) When dealing with *sores*, the aim of the ñanga seems to be to conceal them under a black powder, so as to put the patient under a false impression: for he thinks himself healed as he can no longer see his sore. Mankhelu used to grind the bark of the *ndjuptura* tree (a tree with a white sap), and put the powder on the sore to make it dry up, renewing the application on the fourth day, then five days later, then six days later. — For *wounds* Kokolo used the sap of the *shilangamahlo*, and made it fall in drops on the bleeding wound. The *nkahlu* (p. 307) with its milky sap, is commonly used for this purpose. — "But", says Kokolo, "the chief is *shilangamahlo*". *Bruises* are treated by the *rimba* method.

(1) Gungunyane, who killed thousands of poor Ba-Chopi without the slightest remorse, could not conceal his horror at Dr. Liengme who dared to amputate limbs, or to cut open the body in order to cure patients!

When some one has fallen and some complication is feared, a fire is made ; when there are enough glowing embers, and the soil is very hot, the ashes are pushed aside and a little sand taken from the river is poured on the spot, some nkuhlu leaves over it. The patient leans over the place " which has been so treated " ; this is an unexpected application of the principle " similia similibus curantur " : as the soil has been burnt but " quenched " (timula) by the cool sand, so the bruise will be prevented from burning him dangerously ! — *Decayed teeth* are not extracted, properly speaking ; they are broken down with a piece of iron, on which the Native dentist beats with a hammer, until he has removed as much as he can of the tooth ! Sometimes he breaks the jaw also ; the jaw may even pass through the cheek, causing a frightful wound ! Once one of my colleagues had to perform the operation of the removal of the inferior maxillary bone, which was protruding as the result of the so-called extraction of a tooth by a ñanga ! — *Snake bites* are treated with a powder made of a snake burnt to ashes, and of some ingredients mixed with it, the whole being *salted* with common salt. Incisions are made in all the joints, wrist, ankle, elbow, and also in front of the neck, and the powder inoculated into them. Children are inoculated as a means of prevention, so that, when bitten, the venom will not affect them ; the doctor has " preceded the snake " (yi yi rangerile).

Medical cases are generally treated more reasonably than surgical cases. Here are some of Kokolo's and Spoon's prescriptions :

To commence with the drug used when one " feels his head ", otherwise has a *headache :* it is the root of a shrub called *nhlangula*, which seems to be a regular anaesthetic, and it is used as follows: the fresh bark is scraped with a knife, and a certain quantity is folded up in a cloth and applied to the forehead for half a day. In case of *toothache* the same drug is used together with another called *ndjenga*: they are boiled ; a little of the decoction thus obtained is held in the mouth and the pain should disappear.

When it " bites inside ", that is to say when one suffers from *colic* or looseness of the bowels, the remedy is *munwangati*,

shimbyati and *shidlanyoka* made up in a bunch. The doctor prepares this medicine with great care, cutting the roots in equal lengths and tying them together with a band of palm leaf. (See illustration, N° 2). He concocts his remedy with a greater quantity of the roots of the milder type, and only a few pieces of those which act more violently. The bunch called shitsimbo is then boiled to bring out the active principles of the drugs, and the decoction is taken by the patient, just as it is. Sometimes

Thonga Pharmacopoeia.

1. Box made of maize bracts, containing medicine. 2. Shitsimbo. 3. Skin of a mole containing powdered drugs. 4. Pill. 5. Bracelet of *tjukunyana*. 6. *Timfisa* amulets. 7. *Sungi* root tied round the ankle.

it is mixed with maize, when preparing the meal, and taken in that way. As the bunch, or packet, of these roots retains its medicinal properties for a long time, a single packet may be used over and over again during a whole week.

The prescription for *dysentery* is as follows : *Shimbyati*, *Shidlambangi*, *Likalahumba*, *Nkomono* and *Nyala* (Strychnos, sp related to spinosa). That for *bronchitis*, or for a cold in the head, is

Menyomamba, *Mphesu* (a kind of mimosa) *Shongwe*, *Ntshatshe* (a papilionaceous shrub), *Gowane* (Zygia fastigiata, a large mimosa) and *Muhlandlopfu*. The last is a very powerful drug : the last but one is less so. For *hydrocele* the following are used : *Lihlehlwa*, *Ntshatshe*, *Nkonono*, *Mamuntana*. The Natives consider this complaint to be contagious, and to be transmitted by matrimonial relations.

I obtained two *purgatives* from my Native doctors : the one, *an aloe*, or cactus, a species of which grows plentifully on our sand dunes ; the sap is squeezed on to grains of millet or sorghum, which are kept in neatly constructed boxes of maize leaves : these are made by plucking an ear of maize, breaking off the cob and leaving the large bracts which enclose it and which adhere to the stalk at its base. This is a very primitive receptacle, and easily procurable (No 1). The medicine is thus kept until required for use, when it is ground to a powder and taken in water. The second of these purgatives is the bark of a tree growing in the Nkomati valley in the Khosen country. It is the one, already alluded to, which was appropriated by one of our Christians, named Eliashib, who administered it to the Rikatla folk in such generous doses that it generally did more harm than good.

Three or four other roots form part of the packet for children ; these are called, as previously explained (I. p. 46), by the general term milombyana, medicines to promote the growth of newly born infants. If an intestinal parasite be expelled by *dlanyoka*, it is burnt to cinders and reduced to a powder ; an incision is made on the belly and on the loins of the child, into which the powder is rubbed. It is a kind of inoculation, a further application of the principle " like cures like ".

The packet used for treating *haematuria* contains six drugs : *Humbutlo*, *Ntshopfa*, *Shintitana* (an Apocynea shrub related to the Artabotrys, p. 307), *Likalahumba*, *Ndjindjila* and *Shimbyati*. According to doctor's directions these are boiled in a pot with beans ; after a while the packet is taken out. The patient must then transfix one bean with a thorn and throw it over his left shoulder ; he pierces a second in the same way and throws it

over his right shoulder, then a third which he swallows. The first two beans are used to " try the earth ", that is to say, to propitiate the several evil influences existing in the soil, which have probably been the cause of the illness. Such is the first part of the treatment. The second part consists in pounding large white tubers (something like elongated potatoes) in a mortar. The paste thus obtained is squeezed into a jar, and the patient must take this juice as well as the beans, seasoned as aforesaid! Every evening he must drink a cup of the bitter mixture (the packet broth), and also a cup of the sweet medicine made from the tubers. If, after this, the haematuria does not stop, the patient will be given a *pungulu*, a turkish bath, which I will describe later on. The foregoing is Spoon's method of treatment. — Dr. Kokolo had another cure for the same complaint; he used *Shirole Nembe-nembe*, *Likumba-kumba* and *Nhlanhlana*, which he recommended to be taken in the usual way as a tisane, cutting them up in small pieces in a pot. They are roasted on a brazier and the smoke inhaled through a hollow reed : the carbonised pieces are ground to a powder which is mixed with ordinary food. A curious fact to be noted with regard to this complaint is that the patient's wife, if he be married, has to undergo the same treatment. — *Gonorrhea* is treated with *Shilangamahlo*, *Hlahlana*, *Nembe-nembe* (Cassia petersiana) and *Ntinti* (Artabotrys Monteiroi). If necessary *Shimbyati* is added as an adjuvant. It is with the leaves of this latter plant that Kokolo made the huge pill, 8 inches in circumference, which he presented to me (N° 4).

For the last named illness, as for haematuria, if internal medication does not suffice, a more efficacious method " for outward application only ", is resorted to. A certain number of roots will be calcined and pulverised, the black powder thus obtained being mixed with fat taken from the paunch of an ox. This is rolled up into a ball and placed on red hot embers, and the patient must expose the part affected to the heat thrown out, and to the smoke thus engendered.

Fever is not considered very dangerous by the Thonga, and strange to say, has no special name. It is called : to feel one's

head, or to have the body hot. Natives are so accustomed to it, and its attacks are generally so mild that they do not take much heed of it. They lie on the ground, exposed to the burning sun, wrapped in a blanket, and perspire to their heart's content. " Take the root of *Mbalatangati*, cook it in a little pot and drink it with a spoon ; you will have a good sleep ", says Mankhelu.

Consumption (lifuba) is treated as follows by Mankhelu : a part of the lungs of a crocodile, and of a sheep, is mixed with fat taken from a gnu and a root of the *Khawa* tree. All the ingredients are burnt in a broken pot and the patient must inhale the smoke through a reed : it will dry up in the chest, because the fat of the gnu is always dry and cannot melt (?!)

Leprosy, " the vanquisher of physicians ", is treated by some specialists. There was one near Rikatla, but he absolutely refused to communicate his secret. He belonged to the Chopi tribe. Ba-Pedi prohibit sexual relations to the lepers.

A nurse who has no milk must take a certain Euphorbiacea shrub called *nete*, containing a milky juice, crush it in the mortar, cook it in water and drink it. When a cow refuses to nurse a calf Natives smear the calf with the *ribvumbara* herb, which has a pleasant odour. The cow smells it, and allows the calf to suckle her.

The treatment of *sterility* has already been described (I. p. 188) Mankhelu tried to cure it by digging a root of *Nembe-nembe* and one of *Nhlangowume*; he cooked both together, ordered the woman to eat them during six days, mixing them with her food. This drug was considered as " closing her " (pfala), so that she would no longer have her " tihweti ", and thus be able to conceive. In the meantime, she had to undergo the horola or hondlola rite, which I shall describe presently.

Small pox, was on several occasions introduced by the Whites, or by the Zulu armies on their return from their Northern raids. There have been at least five or six epidemics in the environs of Lourenço Marques during the last fifty years. Natives inoculate the virus itself in order to mitigate the virulence of the disease. This inoculation (which they may have discovered themselves) does not prevent the attack being

very severe. I have seen faces terribly marked after the disease induced by inoculation. A fact still more strange is that it does not give any immunity from a subsequent attack. I know the case of a Christian woman, named Fabiana, who was seriously ill during the epidemic of 1892 and who had already taken the complaint, by inoculation, during a previous epidemic.

Nervous diseases are peculiarly feared by Natives. *Melancholia* is believed to be caused by those spirits of possession which will be the subject of the next paragraph. *Idiocy* has no remedy: nothing can be done with an idiot; " it is death! It has found him!" (Mankhelu). *Delirium* (mihahamo) is cured with *Mbulula khutla*. The patient must enter the hole from which clay is taken for smearing the huts, and is washed with a decoction of the drug when in this hole. Moreover a stick of the same tree is cut and kept in the roof of the hut, and the person who sleeps with the patient will take it every night and place it near his head. " Thus we kill delirium." (Mankhelu). — Another form of insanity is called *rihuhe*, " the disease which comes from far away with the winds " — " ri pfa timhehwen " (Mankhelu). A drug is prepared with the *shiromo* root, mixed with the lung of a sheep and the blood found inside its heart. All these things are burnt in a broken pot, and made into a medicinal powder. The patient is brought to the broken pot; a cut is made in his head so that it bleeds abundantly until the pot is filled with blood; the blood boils in the pot, it becomes firm and is burnt. The ñanga takes it and buries it in an ant's nest, according to the timula rite described below. The wound of the patient is filled with the medicine; he eats the meat, he sleeps: — " If you have been equal to the occasion, he will be cured; you have given him lots of sleep. — You have killed the *rihuhe* " (Mankhelu). The *wutleka* disease means both *convulsions* of little children (generally explained by the agency of Heaven), called tilo (p. 392), and epilepsy. The great remedy for the latter disease, which frightens the Natives very much, is provided by monkeys and baboons. Pieces of their skin and their stools are roasted in a broken pot. Some pieces of lion's

skin are added; when the powder is made, the limbs of the patient are smeared with it; his body is also sprinkled with a decoction made of these drugs, or an ointment is prepared from them and applied to the head, the fingers, and all the limbs, which are then pulled with some force (olola). The patient is laid down and leaves of the hlampfura tree (Kigelia) are put on his head: — "He sleeps, he passes water, he evacuates stools, he is cured"! But to confirm the healing, a very curious ceremony is performed which reminds one of the rite of the scapegoat, so often met with amongst primitives. The doctor makes the image of a monkey (habu) with a kind of grass called *muhulane;* this image is smeared with the drugs just described, tied with a long rope; a little boy must then drag the dummy out of the village, and all his comrades hit him with sticks, saying: "Go away! Go away!" He runs until he reaches a tree far away in the bush. All the boys hang the figure to it, and it remains there swinging in the wind. The disease has thus been expelled!

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In our study of these various treatments, we have met with about twenty different prescriptions of Native physicians, containing, in all, some 40 to 50 different drugs, to be made use of in various ways: outward applications, inhalation, fumigation, infusion, decoction, inoculation, manducation of carbonised or pulverised drugs, etc. We may then well assert that, up to a certain point, the Blacks do possess an ars medica. But, to complete our review of medical matters, I must still mention a few curious practices of the Thonga doctors, which forcibly remind us of those to which our own practitioners sometimes have recourse.

To begin with: *cupping*. A full account of this will be found in the story of the "Gambadeur de la Plaine" (Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga, page 357) where a young girl resuscitates a buffalo by performing this operation. She does it as follows: water is boiled and in it is placed the packet of roots required;

a spot in the temporal region is carefully washed, and a few incisions are made with a razor (likari). A particular horn (nhluku ya ku lumeka), which is open at both ends, is placed over the incisions and the operator, placing the horn in his mouth, draws in his breath, causing the blood to flow freely. The wound is then exposed to the vapour emanating from the boiling *shitsimbo* packet, and smeared with a particular ointment, kept in a calabash.

The next in order of the practices which we are noticing, is the *phungula* (Ro.), or *hungula* (Dj.), a kind of turkish or vapour bath, which is administered in certain complaints and also after the funeral rites, in order to remove the contamination of death (I. p. 145). A circular enclosure is made, with a screen of mattings, in the middle of which the patient is placed, and, close by him, a pot on live embers containing leaves which are supposed to possess medicinal properties. A second mat is then spread over the top of the enclosure, thus shutting the patient up in a sort of small hut. The smoke from the live embers makes him cough terribly ! The hot vapour from the pot induces profuse perspiration from every pore, and the victim of this treatment is left for a very considerable time in this intensely uncomfortable predicament ! When, at length, the remedy is supposed to have had sufficient time to act efficaciously, the mats are removed. The patient suddenly finds himself in the open air, absolutely dripping with perspiration. I saw a man remaining in this condition, in the chill of the evening, apparently risking inflamation of the lungs. The doctor rubs his cheeks, or some other parts of his body, with either a white or a black powder. Such is the Thonga turkish bath, which is frequently referred to in their folklore. — The phungula is administered in most of the cases where ritual defilement is feared, or is believed to have caused the disease. The kind of poisoning caused by the impurities connected with death, menses, lochia, etc., manifests itself by swelling of the joints, of the hands and feet, pains in the bones, etc. This vapour bath is also resorted to in order to cure married people who do not succeed in having children. The physician makes for them a

shitsimbo packet of the following roots : *Nhlangawume*, *Mpoñwana*, *Ritiyi*; he cooks it in the pot inside the mat enclosure ; he puts into the fire, under the pot, part of the flesh of the goat which has been sacrificed for the occasion, especially its uterus. The flesh has been previously smeared with drugs. So, either by the vapour, or by the smoke, the medicine enters the patient. " Ba wupfa ", — " they ripen " or " are cooked ". When the mat is removed a pot full of cold water is poured over them and extinguishes the phungula which has cooked them. They will have to take home the meat, and cook it in their hut together with the packet of roots. Another packet is put in the pot in which they keep their beer.

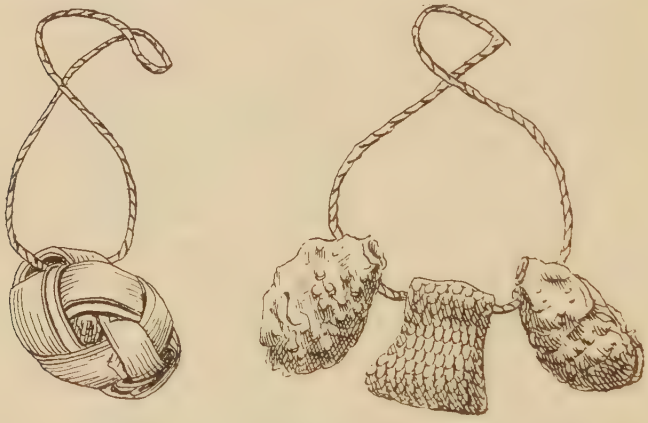
A third practice, quite as old as the foregoing, is the *tlhema* or *cautery*. This may be done with a packet of roots which are heated and applied to the part affected. But, as a general rule, cautery is done *with the foot*. This is undoubtedly, a curious proceeding ! Kokolo gave me a detailed description of it : a hoe is made red-hot ; an obliging individual lends his foot, a foot which has rarely been encased in a shoe and possesses a sole with a skin like leather ! This natural sole is rubbed with the leaves of a plant called shungwe, which has been chewed and mixed in the palm of the hand with saliva and grease. For the same purpose Mankhelu employed a fat comprising among other ingredients, the following drugs : *Hlampfura* and *Ñwambula-wamitwa*. Then the kindly operator places his foot on the red-hot hoe and, with a quick movement, plants it on the spot to be cauterised, the patient being hardly able to bear the contact. As for the owner of the foot, the horny sole seems so thick that he feels no pain at all. This is the remedy for the *shitjebe blood*, probably pleurisy.

The last practice to be noticed, the one by which the doctor gives his patient a clean bill of health, is the *hondlola* or *hondla* (Ro.) or *horola* (Dj.) : it is a ceremony of purification, performed *after the cure is effected*, to remove the defilement (nsila) of disease. " In this way ", says Mankhelu, " we disperse (hulurisa) the bloods which have made the patient sick, so that they cannot return to him violently. " The hondla is obliga-

tory after all serious diseases and after the weaning. I have described how it is performed in this last case (I. p. 57). According to Mankhelu, a sacrifice is always made in connection with the hondlola. In the case of adults, a goat is slaughtered. The doctor having carefully taken a piece of each limb of the goat, prays "by means of them" to his gods, saying:

You so and so! This is my ox which I have slaughtered... Give me strength (ndji thwasane matimba) that I may cure this man. I have no other drugs! I do not add any other to those which you gave me. So give me strength; accept me with both hands, that I may be able to cure.

The psanyi of the goat is then mixed with various drugs, especially the *Shireti* and the powder of the calabashes. The



Fowa and timfisa, medico-magical amulets.

patient, sitting on a mat, rubs his whole body (tihorola) vigorously with this psanyi; all the particles (timhore, or timhorola, or timbhorola) which fall on the mat are carefully gathered together and the bones are consulted to know where they must be thrown (See Letter D). This is the *tumba* rite, following the hondlola. The bones may perhaps have indicated a hole in the trunk of a tree, or the river, or the mud of the marsh, or an ant's nest, or the entrance to a molehill. The physician takes the timbhorola in a piece of broken pot, or sala shell, introducing them into the hole which he closes with a

little clay ; he has with him water in a little calabash, takes a sip and says : " Tsuu !, or pheuuu ! Let the misfortune remain here." On the return home no looking back is allowed : this is taboo. Should the tumba be made in an ants' nest, and should the ants themselves close the hole, this is a very good sign ! The bones may perhaps order the particles contained in the sala shell to be placed in another kind of ant's nest, made of grass ; the ñanga will go during the day and prepare a place for the shell. In the evening, when it is dark, he will put the shell into the hole without looking back towards it. The ants will take all the timbhorola down into their nest, and so "the misfortune will remain with them ". (Mboza). — The hondlola rite is generally accompanied by the preparation of *protective amulets (timfisa)*. The nails and hair of the patient are cut, put into small bags of lizard skin and tied round his neck. One frequently meets people wearing this ornament which also aims at making the cure permanent. Sometimes the nails are those from one hand and foot only. The *psirungulo* i. e. the astragalus of the slaughtered goat, or the beak, claws and some feathers of the hen (p. 376) are also tied round the neck of the patient. This is the *religious amulet*, whilst the lizard bag is the *medico-magical* one. Convalescents are moreover provided with the *fowa*, a kind of rattle, consisting of a root called sungi (no relation between this word and the sungi of the circumcision school, I. p. 77) contained in a kind of round box made of palm leaf which is tied round the ankle. This is intended to protect them against the perspiration of those who have sexual relations (p. 335). They sometimes wear a little piece of reed filled with a protective powder, as do also the nurses during the whole nursing period (1) (I. p. 46).

(1) I may here mention two other articles which are frequently worn by Thonga Natives : one is the dried seed-pod of the flower of the large Protea bush (sugar bush) which is so common on the slopes of the Drakensberg. It looks like a hard brownish cone, all covered with concentric layers of little square ledges. This cures *vertigo*. Why ? No doubt because when it is turned round rapidly, it makes the spectator giddy. It is hung round the neck with a string. This curious remedy is brought back from the Barberton mountains by those who go to work in the Transvaal. The second is a bracelet

The hondlola rite also marks the moment when sexual relations, which had been suspended during the disease, are resumed. Celebrating the victory over disease, the day of hondlola is considered as a fête day. Beer is prepared as a mark of gratitude to the doctor and "to rejoice his heart". It is also the day of reckoning: the physician must be paid: this individual has not, however, waited until now to ask for a "refresher". From the commencement of the case, it has been necessary to *pfula hwama*, that is to say to lift the cover of the medicine wallet by means of sixpence or a shilling. At times he has been very anxious to change the medicine, in order to produce a greater effect; on such occasions he has been presented with a chicken as an encouragment; but on the day of the hondla, when his skill is joyfully attested, and the cure an accomplished fact, accounts must be definitely settled with the ñanga who will henceforth discontinue his visits.

III. *Conception of Disease.*

All the preceding details enable us now to understand the conceptions which underlie all these rites and ceremonies. Possessing so few, or so false, notions regarding Anatomy or Physiology, it is not surprising that correct pathological knowledge is absolutely non-existent amongst South African Bantu. In fact this knowledge is both superficial and superstitious. I will try to prove it by now studying the *names* given to the diseases, the *causes* to which they are attributed, the *notion* of contagion, and the ideas underlying the *hondlola rite*.

1) As regards the way of *naming the diseases*, it is most childish. Thonga call the complaint from which they suffer by the

often seen round little children's wrists, and made from the skin of a kind of tawny mole, called tshukunyana, which digs its burrows almost on the level of the ground. You can see the earth a little raised all along its track. The *Filaria* parasite, which is often met with in our tribe, also creeps under the skin in a similar way (p 321). See illustration, N° 5. These are two new instances of the principle: "similia similibus curantur". Bags filled with snake powder are also often worn as a preventative.

name of the organ affected : for instance "I have a foot, I have a hand, I have a neck" (ndji ni nenge, boko, nkolo) means : "I have a pain, in my foot, my hand or my neck". These curious expressions doubtless arise from the fact that no notice is taken of the existence of any particular organ until something goes wrong with it. "He has a head" means "He is mad". For "I have a headache", the expression "ndji yingela nhlo ko", meaning "I feel my head", would generally be used. Very often one hears complaints of "a blood" (ngati) which moves from spot to spot, finally taking up its abode in the side, or in the stomach, or elsewhere. This is an idea similar to that of the morbid humours of olden days. There are then as many diseases as there are organs and we are often asked for remedies for the "nape of the neck complaint", or for the "inside trouble". This latter might be gastritis, congestion of the liver, or dysentery, and we should often be wholly at a loss how to prescribe were it not for the highly picturesque, and often particularly appropriate, imagery used by the patients, or by their friends, in describing the various symptoms; for instance when a sufferer from "inside trouble" says that "it bites" (luma), we know that it is a case of intestinal colic. But it becomes somewhat puzzling when a patient declares that he suffers from an intestinal worm which passes from his stomach into his neck and returns through his lungs, when it does not happen to take a fancy to remain in his head ! "It emits a sound like *pfie...pfie...*", said an old man to me when describing this animal, which plays an important part in the medical science of the Natives. (1) (I. p. 46).

There are, however, certain technical names which are used to designate some diseases; thus *mukuhlwana* means cough and the mucous catarrh of the throat and nose. The ordinary *mbukulu* seems to be tonsilitis, while the extraordinary *mbukulu* is an affliction accompanied with fever, vertigo, delirium and madness, which is generally attributed to the malign influences

(1) I may here mention that the tape worm and the lumbric, both called tinyokana, small snakes, are very common amongst the Natives, and are well known to them.

of the spirits of the departed. — Hydrocele (*masangu*, or *masenge*) is wide-spread and well-known, as is also bilharzia, a form of haematuria called *shinyalu* or *ndjundjwane*, which appears in severe forms and is due to a special parasite. Rheumatism is called *shifambo*, the runner, as it moves from spot to spot. Syphilis, imported long ago by Europeans, is universally known, and is, alas, so general in the environs of the town of Lourenço Marques that almost all Natives suffer from it (p. 46). The Natives call it *buba* (probably from bubo). Gonorrhea is of more recent importation, and dates — according to my informant Tobane — from the time of the construction of the Pretoria Railway : it is called *shikandjameti*, the disease which crushes the villages.

The eruptive diseases are perhaps those which Natives best recognise. *Shintshinana* is the name for measles, but seems also applicable to scarlet fever. Small pox is called *nyedzana*, and, as regards psychic or nervous troubles, the treatment of which we have just seen, they are attributed either to Heaven or to evil spirits or to the winds. The name of the *wutleka* disease is worthy of notice. This word comes from *wutla* which means to rob, to seize; wutleka, the qualificative derivate (Thonga Grammar § 196) means the condition of something taken away. It seems as if this were a passive meaning, as if the patient had been robbed by some agent. However Mankhelu explains the term by saying : "The patient has stolen the *rirabi*" — "a wutle rirabi"; *rirabi* is very closely allied to a word meaning stick; the old doctor says it is the name of the disease If this etymology be correct the patient would be considered as having taken the disease by a kind of robbery. But Native etymology must always be accepted with caution.

All these names show how unprecise is the pathological knowledge of the Thonga.

2) As regards the *causes of diseases*, Thonga are groping in the grossest superstition. When a medical man wishes to treat a disease, he first tries to diagnose its cause. The Bantu ñanga does the same, only the difference is this : he takes very little notice of the physical symptoms. No auscultation ! No

palpation ! No examination of the secretions, blood, saliva, or urine, as these are too disgusting and must be covered with sand as soon as possible ! The great means of diagnosing a disease is the throwing of bones. There are three great causes of disease : the spirits of the gods, the wizards and the makhumo, defilement from death or from impure persons. A fourth one not so common is Heaven. The bones will reveal which is the one to be combated according to the way in which they fall.

3) The ideas regarding *contagion* are not much in advance of the other pathological notions. The two most dreaded diseases in this respect are consumption (lifuba) and leprosy (nhlokonho). *Consumption* is by no means a new ailment due to civilisation, though it has increased enormously since Thonga boys have gone to the towns. The proof that it has been known for a long time is its great importance in the ritual. For the Thonga, it is caused by the *makhumo*, i. e., the contamination of death, or the defilement resulting from contact with a woman in the state of physiological impurity. Hence the law ordering people affected with one or the other of these kinds of makhumo to eat with spoons : they protect themselves against the poison which may make them consumptive. A curious feature in the notion of *contagion* is the following : when Sokis died (I. p. 138) I heard some present entreat his sister, who was carrying a child on her shoulders, saying to her : " Do not cry ! If you cry the disease will jump on your baby ! " There were two reasons for this warning : to cry in presence of misfortune increases tenfold the danger (compare p. 303); moreover the contagion of disease is especially to be feared in connection with the relatives of the sick or dead person. Hence the strange custom illustrated on plate p. 27 : when a man dies of consumption his relatives are absolutely forbidden to eat any of the food he may have left. The " luma milomo " ceremony (I. p. 146) is of no use in this case. In former times all his mealies were burnt. Nowadays, however, it is allowable for people outside his family to buy and consume his provision. The large storehouse, on p. 27, contained the mealies harvested in Sokis' fields. These were sold to strangers, whilst relatives bought other mealies

which were stored in the small hut for the use of his widow and children. The same reason, no doubt explains why the widow of a consumptive must *lahla khombo* with strangers, and not with men of the village (I. p. 203).

This peculiar idea of contagion also gives rise to the rules for *burying lepers*. Their relatives must not have anything to do with the burial (I. p. 478). Relatives-in-law can perform this painful duty ; or possibly the family of the deceased leper will ask a friend to help them in their distress. "Have you prepared something to reward me"? he asks, and if so, he digs a grave just outside the wall of the hut where the patient died, removes the reeds of the wall, and pulls down the corpse into the hole without any funeral ceremony. The relatives are assembled far away on the square, and do not even dare to look at the burial. All the implements are broken in the depth of the forest, at a great distance, for fear that a relative may touch one of them and die. Or they are left in the hut, and the whole village at once removes. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded ; however lepers are not segregated ; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village.

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is the "possession" by the *Bandjao spirits*. Should you pick up on the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump upon you (tlulela).— Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nurse must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic.

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take by wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen.

4) The *hondlola rite* seems to show that, for the Thonga, a serious illness constitutes a *marginal period*, after which the patient must be aggregated afresh to society. The rite evidently bears the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with psanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the « timbhorola », the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of aggregation. In the disease of possession, as we shall see, it is the aggregation to society of spirit-possessed persons: it amounts to an initiation.

The medical art of the Bantu is mingled with such an amount of superstition and errors that one can rely very little upon it. The question which I put at the beginning of the section is therefore very difficult to solve. What is the duty of the White Government in respect of the Native quacks ? The ideal would be to replace them by fully qualified, civilised doctors. As this is impossible, let the medical missionaries at least be encouraged, and their number increased, and let a medical course be open to educated Natives, if not a complete University course, at least such instruction as would allow them to treat their fellow men in a scientific way, the medicine-men being gradually prevented from practising their very questionable art.

B. POSSESSIONS

The curious psychic phenomenon, which I am now about to describe, belongs to the medical domain: it is "the disease", or rather the "madness of the gods" (bubabyi bya psikwembu). But at the same time it bears a distinctly religious character, the spirits which are believed to cause the disease being *psikwembu*, spirits of deceased people, to whom a worship will be addressed. On the other hand, the rites connected with the

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, coming home after having had sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone. But it has probably been a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

treatment of this kind of madness are decidedly magical, and those who have suffered from it often become recognised magicians, claiming to possess supernatural powers.

This is a very interesting subject from the point of view of psychology and psychiatry. Phenomena of possession exist amongst most uncivilised races, even amongst more advanced peoples, and it will be useful to compare the manifestations of this disease amongst Bantu with those met with in other parts of the world. I will however leave this task to professionals, and only try faithfully and clearly to describe and, if possible, to understand the facts which I witnessed myself. This disease has spread enormously amongst the Thonga in the last thirty years. It is said that it was very rare, even unknown, previously; since then it has become quite an epidemic, although it is actually rather on the decrease. Possessions are more frequent amongst the Ba-Ronga than in the Northern clans.

I. *The Spirits which cause the Disease.*

Strange to say, the gods or spirits, which are credited with the power of possessing the people, are not the ancestors of the Thonga themselves, the ancestor-gods, but are Zulu spirits and those of the Ba-Ndjao tribe, who inhabit the country beyond the Sabie, as far as the environs of Beira. It seems that the possessions which first occurred were due to the Zulu and Ngoni spirits; possibly they coincided with the invasion of the warriors of Manukosi, and with the ever increasing exodus of young men who go to work in the diamond mines at Kimberley, or the gold mines at Johannesburg, or Natal, and travel across the country occupied by Zulus. As regards the Ba-Ndjao spirits they are sometimes called *amandiki*, and are said to have followed the Thonga and the Ngoni soldiers of Gungunyane, who established themselves for some years at Mosapa, right in the middle of the Ndjao country, to the North of the Sabie, and who, later on, came down again from that mountainous region into the fertile plain of Bilene.

(Lower Limpopo). On the other hand, when the war of 1894 to 1895 compelled the Northern Ba-Ronga, those from Mabota, Zihlahla and Nondwane to fly, they left, so the story goes, taking with them the gods who had possessed them and "scattered" them so thoroughly in the countries of the North that, when they returned to their own homes, they were no longer molested by these *psikwembu*. That is what I was told by a Native. We must carefully note, at the outset, these two ideas: the tormenting spirits are the *manes of strangers* and not of the people of the country, and they frequently attack the Thonga who happen to be travelling in such countries, and follow them in their further migrations. (1)

The Ndjao possessions appear to be worse than the Zulu. "Bundjao bya karata" — "the Ndjao possession is painful." If the incantations used are in Zulu for Zulu possessions, they are in the Ndjao language when such are caused by Ndjao spirits, and those who suffer from this affliction are known by the large white beads which they wear in their hair. Sometimes it is merely a short string of small beads, hanging down somewhere from the head. I well remember seeing a good-looking young woman wearing one of these curious ornaments, on the banks of a stream, in a wooded valley called Nhlalalene, where we had made a halt during one of our journeyings. I was struck with the sight, and asked my companion why she was thus decorated? — "She invokes the spirits of the Ba-Ndjao", was the reply.

II. *Beginning and Diagnosis of the Disease.*

I have carefully studied the story of many cases of possession amongst the Ba-Ronga (See Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie. Tome X, p. 388). Most of them have begun by a distinct crisis, in which the patient was unconscious, but

(1) However, in the case of Mholombo, the spirit was an old Tembe chief a real ancestor, and in that of Nwasuhwana there was a throng of occupants, amongst them her own son, Manuel, who died some time ago; for Mboza it was also a Ronga, but he died in a foreign a country (See later on).

it seems not to have been brought about by any previous nervous trouble. A woman of the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques, *Ñwashinhwana*, fled from her home and threw herself into the Bay. The contact with cold water brought her back to her senses, after which the bones declared that she had psikwembu. Another one, *Mholombo*, heard a voice calling her during a dream : it was the possessing spirit, which revealed itself later on as being a chief long since dead. I will now give full details of the case of *Mboza*, who was himself possessed at one time, and later on became a regular exorcist. After having worked in Kimberley for some time, he returned home in good health. But soon afterwards, he was lame for six months. He attributed his difficulty in walking to rheumatism (shifambo). There was some improvement in his condition, but he began to feel other symptoms : he lost his appetite and almost completely ceased to eat. Here is his testimony : " One day, having gone with another young man to gather juncus, in order to manufacture a mat, the psikwembu started at once in me " (ndji sunguleka hi psikwembu psikañwe). I came back home, trembling iu all my limbs. I entered the hut ; but suddenly I rose to my feet and began to attack the people of the village ; then I ran away, followed by my friends who seized me and at once the spirits were scattered (hangalaka). When conscious again, I was told I had hurt a *khehla* (a man with the wax crown — I. p. 129), and had struck other people on their backs : " He ! " said they, " he has the gods (or he is sick from the gods, a ni psikwembu) ". Thus the first signs of a possession seem to be a nervous crisis, but also the occurence of certain suspicious symptoms : a persistant pain in the chest, irrepressible hiccough, extraordinary yawning, emaciation without apparent cause, etc. However these symptoms are not sufficient ground for a diagnosis, and the bones are always consulted to come to a conclusion. The amulets of the patient (called " his shade ") are placed on the mat, the bones thrown near them. We shall see, under letter D, how they must fall to confirm the diagnosis. Should they do so, a second consultation takes place in order to know to which doctor the treatment must be entrusted. There are

medicine-men who are specialists for this disease. They are not proper *nanga*, they are called *gobela* (dji-ma), at least amongst the Ba-Ronga who suffer from possessions more than the other clans. These gobela have formed many rival schools in which the drugs used, and the rites followed, slightly differ; the school of Khongosa, Sindondondo, Ñwatshulu, who are men, and those of Ñwamutheto (in the Shifimbatello district) and of Thambulanyoka, viz., Snake-bone, both of whom are women, etc. Ñwashiñwana was treated by a disciple of Khongosa; Mboza by Ñwatshulu.

III. *The Treatment of Possessions, or Exorcism.*

In former times, the only remedy was waving a large palm-leaf (milala) in front of the patient. This was deemed sufficient to "scatter the spirits". Now the treatment is much more complicated. Though it varies slightly in the various schools above mentioned, it comprises four principal rites: the drum performance, the ablution in the gobo calabash, the drinking of the blood and the hondlola ceremony. In the Khongosa treatment the gobo rite comes first, and is called *baselo*. A certain root, the *phuphumane*, is prepared, and dipped into water in a big calabash cut through the middle so as to form a large basin. The mixture is stirred; an abundant foam is thus produced and the patient must wash himself with it: or he must take the basin on his knees, suck in a little of this foam between his lips and spit it out in the direction of the four winds, saying *tsu*, evidently as a first means of propitiating the possessing spirits, which will be invoked and entreated to reveal themselves in the following rite.

In the case of Mboza, the calabash came as a second phase of the treatment, the first being the drum performance.

1) The drum performance (gongondjela).

This extraordinary rite reminds one of the witches' sabbaths of medieval times by the infernal din and uproar through which

the possessed will have to pass. However, notwithstanding the external resemblance, it is totally different, having nothing to do with witchcraft proper, and being only a "medical practice" in the eyes of the Thonga. — A strange medical practice, indeed, better devised to kill than to heal the patient!

In the first place the bones must be consulted to find out in what spot the sabbath should be held. If the bone, which represents the patient, falls in the middle of all the rest, it shows that the tambourines, or "tom-toms", must be beaten in the interior of the hut itself. If the bone falls on the outer edge, the sabbath must be in the doorway; if it falls farther to one side, beyond all the others, the treatment must take place on the village square (hubyen); should it roll still further off, and should the astragalus of the roaming gazelle also be separated from the rest, it shows that the meeting must take place in the bush, quite away from the village. If the bones remain silent, revealing nothing, then the throwing will be continued behind the hut, or on the square, until they speak. It is also necessary that the four shells Oliva, and Cypraea, which form part of the set of bones, fall on their backs, exposing their crack or mouth. This signifies that the possessing gods, the spirits, will come out: there will be an egress for them, whilst if, on the contrary, the shells fall differently, shewing their convex sides, the diviner will say: "Ma tikarata ntsena" — "all your trouble is in vain": the sabbath will have no effect: no means of egress for the gods! (Compare Letter D. Divination). But a way will soon be found to get over this difficulty, and it will not be long before the sabbath is in full swing.

In the hut, right in the middle, the patient is seated. Dejected, with downcast eyes, and fixed expression, he waits... Everyone throughout the country knows that to-day, to-night, on the appearance of the new moon, the strange and terrible exorcism will begin. All those who have once been possessed will officiate. The director of the ceremony, the *gobela*, whom the bones have appointed, holds his tambourine, made of the skin of the big varan lizard, stretched over a circular wooden frame. (See Illustration p. 107, N° 9). In the calm quiet of

the evening air, the first blow is struck. It reverberates, is heard from afar on all sides : it penetrates the thickets and reaches the neighbouring villages, where it inspires an emotion, a transcendent delight born of curiosity, of malice, and I don't know what feelings of inconscient satisfaction. All rush in the direction of the well-known sound : each one hurries to the hut of the possessed one, and all wish to take part in this struggle, the conflict with the invisible world.

They all assemble, some with tambourines, others with large tin cases picked up on the outskirts of the town (tins in which kerosine oil is sold in Lourenço Marques), and still others with calabashes, filled with small objects, which do duty as rattles (ndjele, yin-tin) ; and now, crowding round the patient, they commence their hideous din, striking, brandishing, shaking their various instruments of torture with all their might and main. Some lightly touch the head or the ears of the unfortunate sufferer. It is a frightful hubbub which continues, with but short interruptions, during the whole night, or until the performers in this fantastic concert are compelled to stop from sheer fatigue.

But this is merely the orchestra, the accompaniment. That which is the most essentially necessary is the *singing*, the human voice, the *chorus of exorcists*, a short refrain, following a still shorter solo, repeated a hundred or a thousand times, always with the same object in view, toward which all strive seriously and persistently, namely to compel the spiritual being, this mysterious possessing spirit which is there, to reveal itself, to declare its name, after which it will be duly overcome. These songs are, at the same time, both simple and poetic. They address the spirit in laudatory terms, trying to cajole it by flattery, to get the right side of it, and thus induce it to grant the signal favour of a surrender. Here follows the first of those songs which I heard. — One day, when I was travelling, hearing the uproar of a sabbath behind some bushes, I jumped off my waggon, and found myself right in the midst of a ceremony of exorcism.

Shibendjana ! u vukele bantu !
Rhinoceros ! thou attackest man !

These were the words shouted by the singers around a poor woman who appeared to be in some dream, and was seemingly unconscious ; my arrival had scarcely any effect on the unearthly hubbub, in spite of the fact that the appearance of a White man in the villages of that district was generally considered to be quite an event.

When the hours pass without any visible effect being produced on the patient, the chorus is changed. The night may be far spent, and the day-light at hand :

> Come out, spirit, you make us weep till sun-rise !
> Why are we thus ill-treated ?

Or, perhaps by way of bringing greater pressure to bear, they will threaten to leave the spirit, for good and all, if it will not heed the chidings of the frenzied tambourine players :

> Come, let us be off ! bird of the chiefs ! Let us go away (as thou treatest us so harshly).

The melodies of the exorcists' incantations have a singularly persistent, incisive, penetrating character. I had the opportunity of noting down one which was sung with a strange alto accompaniment in fourths. This tune is N° 32 in the collection (p. 262). The disturbing effect of this music was intensified by a very pronounced sforzando when the chorus took up the dominant phrase. This is the song, as universally known and rendered in the environs of Lourenço Marques.

> Awake ! Awake ! The daylight breaks ! Now the bird is singing !
> Play also, Zulu, play in the bush. Now the bird is singing.

The meaning is not difficult to catch. « Day is dawning. Awake then, sleeping spirit ! (This spirit is called Mu-Ngoni, Zulu, for the case is supposed to be one of the Zulu possession). The birds are already sporting in the thickets. Soon we shall be obliged to go to our work and leave you ! It is your last chance ; come out and salute the morning and reveal yourself to us ! »

This insistence is renewed. The patient begins to show

signs of assent. The Shikwembu is preparing to come out. The assistants encourage it :

> Shawane ! Mu-Ngoni Huma ha hombe hi tindlela ta ku lulama...
> We salute thee, spirit ! Come out gently by the straight way.

Meaning : Do not hurt the afflicted one ! Spare him !

Conquered at length by this noisy concert the patient enters a condition of nervous exaltation. The crisis occurs, the result of evident hypnotic suggestion. He rises and dances wildly in the hut. The hubbub is redoubled. They implore the spirit *to declare its name.* A name is shouted, a Zulu name, that of some ancient departed chief, such as Manukosi, or Mozila ; some times, strange to say, the name of Gungunyana himself was given, although he was still living. An old woman, formerly possessed, told me that she cried out the name of Pitlikeza, and it appeared that this Pitlikesa was an itinerant Zulu bard, who wandered about the district of Delagoa when she was a young girl. She was quite convinced that the spirit of that individual had taken up its abode in her, tens of years after Pitlikeza's passage through the country.

In the case of Mboza the patient was covered with a large piece of calico during all the drum performance. A first medicinal pellet was burnt under the calico, in a broken pot full of embers, a male pellet (made with the fat of an ox or a he-goat) ; no result having been obtained, a second pellet, a female one, made from fat of a she-goat, was introduced. Ñwatshulu prayed the gods as follows :

> Help us, you Ngoni spirits (or gods, psikwembu). I received this medicine from your hands ; so " they " must come out at once from my patient. Should he have swallowed a snake, or a toad, should these prevent the spirits from coming out, let these animals run away, far away, and provide an egress for the spirits.

When the second pellet was nearly all burnt, Mboza began to tremble ; the women sang with louder voices. The *gobela* shouted amidst the uproar : " Come out, Ngoni ! " Then he

ordered the singers to keep quiet, entered under the veil and said : "You who dance there, who are you ? A Zulu ? A Ndjao ? Are you a hyena ?" The patient nodded his head and answered : "No!" — "Then you are a Zulu ?" — "Yes, I am..." And, during a pause, he said : "I am Mboza." Mboza was a Ronga who died in Kimberley many years ago. The uproar was resumed and the third pellet was introduced. This is the "pellet par excellence", neither male nor female, the one which is expected to have the strongest effect. Mboza suddenly rose, threw himself on the assistants, beat them on the head, scattered them all right and left, and ran out of the hut feeling as if the spirits were beating him ! "Every one saw that day that I had terrible spirits in me." In the crisis of madness the patient sometimes throws himself into the fire and feels no hurt, or falls in catalepsy (a womile, lit. becomes dry), and strikes his head against wood, or the ground, without feeling pain.

Sometimes the concert of tambourines continues for three or four days, a week, or a fortnight. I know a woman (since converted to Christianity under the name of Monica) who underwent a seven days treatment of this description. All depends upon the patient's nervous condition, and upon the state of dejection into which fasting and suffering have brought him.

The spirit having disclosed its name and title, it is henceforward known and can be interrogated. Spoon, the diviner, whose wife had been possessed twice, once by the Zulus and once by the Ba-Ndjao, told me the story of one of these confabulations. He happened to be in one of the neighbouring villages when he was suddenly sent for in great haste and told that his wife, who had attended a sabbath in such and such a spot, was taken with the madness of the gods. He went as fast as he could to the place indicated, and found that his wife was really beside herself, and dancing like a person possessed. He had never before noticed in her the slightest sign of any possession. The spirit began to speak, as soon as she was somewhat calmed down, and gave answers to the questions put to it: "I entered into this *ligodo*, i. e. into this body, this vessel, in such and such a manner. The husband had gone to work in the gold mines.

I entered into him while he was seated on a stone and, when he returned home I left him and entered into his wife. ". — " Are you alone, spirit ?" is the usual question, to which it may reply : " No, I have my son and my grandson with me"; and, if the assistants suspect that there really are several spirits in the patient, the tambourine symphony is again resorted to, in order to dislodge the entire company : sometimes the possessed enunciates as many as ten different names.

Or it may be that the gobela only asks the name of the father and grandfather of the possessing spirit, in order the better to know the latter with all his genealogy. Such was the case with Mboza. " My father is Ndlebende ", said the spirit. — " Ho!" answered the gobela, " then you are Mboza, son of Ndlebende". And he identified the spirit in that way.

It may be that, at the first sitting, the spirit will claim some satisfaction : a " nturu ", a piece of calico of such and such a colour. It is also generally at this time that the patient will *sing his song*. Every possessed person invents a song which will be henceforth *his*, and by means of which crises, or trances will be provoked or cured. Ñwashiñwana sang :

Alas ! my father ! Medicine-men can do nothing for me !
Who will deliver me ?

Mboza :

I am the one who wanders about, I come out from the body of magicians.

These songs are generally in Zulu, and it is asserted that, even if the patient does not know this language, he will be able to use it in his conversation, by a kind of miracle of tongues !

The first act is now completed. It has succeeded in forcing the spirit to reveal its name.

2) The rite of the gobo basin

When Mboza had finished revealing the name of the spirits possessing him, he had to undergo the rites of the *gobo*. His head was dipped into it, not entirely, but so that his eyes, at

least, might be plunged in water. Then the gobela said : " Open your eyes. " He felt a sensation of burning, and saw nothing but a red space with black dots running to and fro through the field of vision. He was kept in that position for a good long time. Then he raised his head again, and the water fell all over his face and on his body : he was purified (a basile). But this rite does not seem to be essentially a rite of purification. By this kind of baptism the patient is said to have " crossed the sea " : he enters a new life, and this is certainly a rite of passage. Now he will be able to speak, because " he has seen everything ". It is the drug which " makes one see " (muri wa ku bonisa). Some are said to have learnt divination by this ablution of gobo.

Having gone through these two first acts of the treatment, Mboza says he slept soundly. Next day, came the third.

3) The appeasement by blood (kŭ thwaza)

During the confabulation following the concert of tambourines, the spirits speaking through the mouth of the patient, although perfectly distinct from him, had already insisted on some presents ; but there is one in particular that must be given in order to propitiate them and to get rid of them (hangalasa). The refrain of the second verse of the exorcists' song, which I have already quoted, mentions this offering, and half promises it, as an inducement to the spirit to disclose its name. This is what is called the *thwaza*.

Aba ka Khongosa ba thwaza hi huku !

meaning : the patients of Khongosa's school treat to fowl's blood. Blood, an abundance of blood, is necessary to effect the cure of the patient, and to obtain an assurance from the objectionable tenant in possession that it will do no further harm. As a general rule it is treated to something better than fowl's blood. In most schools a she-goat is taken, if the patient be a man, or a he-goat in the case of a woman. The exorcist, who has been in charge of the cure, orders the assistants to repeat the song

which had induced the first crisis. The possessed one again becomes excited, and exhibits the same symptoms of raving madness that I have previously described. Then the animal is pierced under the foreleg (in the case of Mboza it was at the entrance of his own hut), and the patient rushes at the wound, greedily sucks the blood which flows, and, in frenzy, fills his stomach with it. When he has drunk his fill, he has to be dragged away from the animal by main force; certain medicines (one of which is called *ntshatshu*, apparently an emetic) are administered, his throat is tickled with a feather and he retires behind the hut to vomit all the blood he has absorbed. By this means the spirit, or spirits, have been duly appeased and expelled.

The sufferer, now getting better, is next washed again, and smeared with ochre. The spirits will have ochre on the day of thwaza, and torment him if he does not satisfy their desire; Sometimes the *kunga* rite is also practised for the exorcised, viz., no one is allowed to speak to him before having given him a present. (Compare I. p. 191).

It is interesting to note what is done with the different parts of the sacrificed goat: the *bile-bladder* is stuck in the patient's hair as customary (p. 52), to symbolise the happiness and good fortune that the sacrifice has ensured; afterwards he is clothed with *strips of the skin* of the animal. All the tambourine players who are themselves *mathwaza*, i. e. who have already gone through the torture of possession, decorate themselves also with these strips of skin, crossing them over the breast. The strips must be tied together with *munganazi*, i. e. strings made from the roots of the munga tree, which have a pleasant odour, a smell which has the property of "rejoicing the nose" of the spirits, and is always used in the ritual of possessions. In former times people wearing strips were often met with, as these ornaments had to be worn, at that time, *a whole year*, until the hondlola. — The *flesh* of the sacrificed goat also supplies the means of definitely exorcising these mysterious spirit powers. From each limb a small piece is cut, and these pieces are cooked in a separate saucepan, with a powdered drug prepared for this special purpose. The head exorcist

breaks off the branch of an acacia bearing enormous shiny white thorns, on each of which is spiked a piece of meat. The patient runs at full speed towards the branch, and seizes a piece of meat, between his teeth, in passing. While eating it, he rushes towards the East. He comes back, seizes another piece in the same manner, and runs towards the West, and so on towards all the four cardinal points. In this way he propitiates the gods, the spirits of every country, in whatever direction they may lie. The young *mathwaza*, viz., those who have lately passed through this initiation, must also seize the pieces of meat with their teeth, but not the gobela, nor the old mathwaza. This is one of the rites of the Khongosa school. Ñwatshulu used not to observe it. The remainder of the goat is then cooked and eaten. A feast is celebrated, in which the chief exorcist dances and sings his song, all the people clapping their hands (wombela), to encourage him, as an accompaniment. — The *horns and hoofs* will be carefully kept, and placed on the roof of the hut, just over the door (shirañwin) by which the afflicted one enters, evidently to protect the abode from malign influences. — The *astragalus* will be tied, together with the strips, on the sternum of the patient. — The *bones* of the goat are the objects of special care. They must not be broken to eat the marrow, but burnt in the shade of a large tree, where it is " cool ". So the possessing spirit will also be cool (titimela) and not too wild. Sometimes they are preserved in a special pot, and burnt on the day of the hondlola.

The period of convalescence then begins. It lasts one year, and is a distinct marginal period, as clearly appears from the fact that sexual relations are absolutely forbidden during that phase, and until the hondlola. It is also, more or less, a period of apprenticeship, as the possessed one will become an exorcist himself, if his magical powers acquire sufficient development. He accompanies the gobela everywhere, assists him in his cures and so learns the art of exorcism. The apprentice will also have to observe the rites of protection, which I will describe shortly and which will be obligatory during the whole convalescence, and even later on.

4) The final purification of the hondlola and investing with amulets (timfisa).

As we saw, the hondlola, the removal of defilement of disease is necessary at the close of any disease. So, when a possessed is considered healed, he will have to pass through this rite. However it can only be carried out on the one condition that the possessed husband, or wife, has remained in a state of continence during the period of convalescence. In order to know if they have obeyed this law, a fowl will be placed on the head of the patient. If he, or she, has been continent according to order, the bird will remain quiet; it will not fly away, even should someone approach and pass close by. If it flies off making a great noise, the angry exorcist will also take his leave saying: "You have sinned and, in so doing, have marred the efficacy of all my medicines (mi honile miri)." On the other hand, if the rule has been properly observed, the bird will remain quite still, when it will be stabbed with a knife and its blood be used in connection with the hondlola friction. Afterwards the fowl will be plucked and eaten by the village folk, but neither the patient, nor his spouse, nor the exorcist-in-chief will be allowed to partake of it. Thenceforth the husband and wife are permitted to live together as in the past.

The hondlola rites seem particularly complicated in the cases of possession. Their sequence was as follows for Mboza: First he had to pay £ 1 to Ñwatshulu, as a reward for his medical attendance. He gave him the money together with a pot of beer. 2) Then the doctor took his *gobo* calabash, stirred the medicine in order to make it froth abundantly, invoking his gods all the time, saying: "Awake, you who spit on the road, you, Zulus, who have ears capable of hearing, etc... 3) Then he shouted: "Mboza! Eat!" The exorcised had to kneel down and swallow the froth. 4) The exorcist took mafureira fat, mixed it in his hand with medicinal powder, smeared and rubbed the body of the convalescent, from the knees to the feet, the arms, the chest, the belly, and the head. 5) He cut

the nails of the hands and feet with a knife, and also a little of the hair on the forehead, and put the whole into the timfisa bags (p. 428) together with medicinal powder. 6) Then followed the ordinary hondlola friction. A pellet (shibuwu) had been prepared by crushing roots of *bamhuntane* and *shilewana* trees in a mortar, and a hen had been killed. Mboza sat on a mat and the doctor rubbed his whole body with the pellet. He gathered the *timhora*, the particles fallen on the mat, mixed them with the blood of the hen, and again rubbed the patient. 7) Fresh timhora fell on the mat. They were gathered up a second time. Some were put in the amulet bags, the remainder made into a ball, which was not thrown away as in ordinary diseases but carefully put at the back of the hut, where the forked branch was to be planted.

Let us remember that, in the case of the exorcised, the hondlola does not only mean the re-introduction of the patient into the society of the healthy, but his aggregation to the society of magicians. It is the last act of *initiation*: he himself becomes a magician, a doctor able to treat those who are possessed. This new dignity is symbolised by the *shiphandje* (forked branch) which will be given to him to-day, as it is to medicine-men (p. 362), or diviners (See later on). It was Ñwatshulu who chose and cut the branch for Mboza from the tree called *shiralala*. He dug a hole at the back part of Mboza's hut, chewed his sungi or ndjao root, and blew against the foot of the branch before planting it into the hole. Then he fastened the branch in the ground, hung to it the baskets full of drugs and the calabashes full of medicinal powders which he gave his disciple. This branch will be the drug store of the new magician, the place where he keeps all his magic drugs ; it will also be his *altar* (gandjelo), not the altar of the ancestor-gods who have nothing to do here, but that of the possessing spirits to whom he will also henceforth address his worship. (Compare with Mankhelu's forked branch, letter D). This leads us to consider :

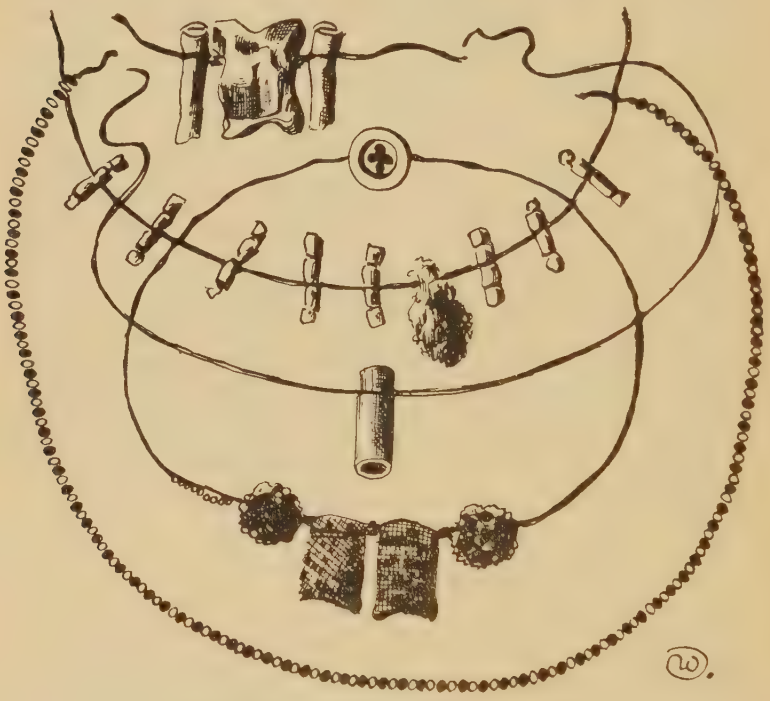
IV. The new condition of the exorcised.

It is interesting to note the progress in the initiation of the possessed through the different acts of his treatment. The tambourine performance has provoked, or accentuated, the manifestation of his dual personality, viz., the patient possessed and the spirit possessing. The baptism in the calabash has helped him to cross the sea and to reach the land beyond, the land of miracles and of magical powers! By the drinking of blood, he has become a superior being: a man who does not fear that which makes others tremble: he has *thwaza*. This word is the same that is employed for the renewal of the moon (p. 283): like the moon, he has been born again; a new light has appeared after times of darkness. He has entered a new life. The period of convalescence, with its taboos, has been his last trial; by the hondlola he definitely enters the society of the initiated. Henceforth he will lead a special life, characterised by protective and propitiatory rites, which tend to the development of his subliminal faculties.

1) Protective rites.

As soon as he was "born again" in the thwaza ceremony, but still more so later on, when he has been elevated to the dignity of the magician, the exorcised, having entered the mysterious world of those endowed with powers, becomes the butt of all his colleagues in the magical arts: first the baloyi, the witches, who *try* him, to see if he is able to discover their malefactions, and secondly the other magicians who are angry to see a rival who will dispute with them their practice. So he must be continually on his guard; in the evening, especially, he must protect himself against their nightly charms. The great protective medicine is a pellet made of the powder of many carbonised roots, stuck together with fat taken from

the bowels of a goat. The first of these roots comes from a tree called *malophe* and found in the Bilen country. This has the power of tying (bopha, in Zulu, means to tie) the knees of the wizards who come during the night, so that they will be found in the morning, stark naked, in the hut of the exorcised. The *nulu* root seems to be used for the same purpose ; the *nsala*, which



Protective amulets worn by exorcised.

also enters into the composition of the protective pellets, rather aims at ensuring the success of the treatment undertaken by the new gobela : as its fruits are plentiful (p. 16), so will the possessed come in great numbers to the doctor. The pellet is used for medical treatment. But the same drugs are also kept under the form of powder, in a piece of reed, or in the calabashes hanging from the forked pole. Every night the exorcised swallows a pinch of it, and throws another pinch on the fire in his hut.

This will prevent enemies from entering, or make them prisoners. Before eating he must also protect himself by chewing (phora) a little of the *manono*, a kind of antiseptic or anti-malefaction root as big as a stick, which he always carries with him; this is the special *luma* of the exorcised. Who knows if his food has not been poisoned by the malpractices of his rivals? When undertaking a journey, he must always chew his *ndjao*, the root of juncus which has been often mentioned and which "cleans roads"; this is "his shield", because the ndjao knows and tries (djinga) everything, and overcomes the hostility of man and things. It is the universal remedy against any inimical influence. So, after having chewed, he spits on his stick, rubs it and starts on his journey, saying: "The road is ripe (wupfile), let us go!" — The astragalus will be the principal charm that the possessed will have to wear, and will be tied round his neck between two little amulet bags or reeds.

The exorcised leads a life of constant fighting against spiritual evil influences. These protective rites are already observed all through the year of convalescence.

Another rite, which is observed after the hondlola only, is the *haza*, viz., the monthly purification of the exorcist. He fills his gobo calabash with a decoction made of the roots of the mphesu and ntjebe trees, drinks the whole, tickles his throat with a feather and vomits the medicine. "A tibasisa ndjen" —"he purifies his insides." This is done at every new moon. The relation between the possessed and the moon, which was first established by the fact that he had *thwaza* as well as the moon, is maintained and accentuated by this rite.

2) Propitiatory rites.

Besides these protective drugs, the exorcised wears a necklace made of little pieces of a creeper called *mayambatju*, tied together with a munganazi string. See the second necklace in the illustration. This is intended *to calm his gods*, and to scatter them when they want to come to him with violence;

this is indeed a great danger : the exorcised is liable to nervous attacks of a dangerous nature, especially during the first few weeks following the exorcism. Perhaps his song has been heard in the distance ? Suddenly he becomes mad, and furiously assaults his neighbours with the small hatchet, or the assagay used in the dances. People run away ; or, on the contrary, they collect and begin to clap their hands, and make their infuriated companion dance and sing his own song. This may help to dispel the spirits, and calm him down. Sometimes, feeling uneasy, foreseeing a crisis, the poor man himself asks them to sing. But he may also be led, in his frenzy, to the bush, far away, unconscious, quite mad, tearing his clothes and his skin with the thorns. This often happened to Ñwashinhwana. Her husband then followed her and, when the crisis was over, he saw her falling down exhausted and brought her home, when, having returned to her senses, she felt very sad and wept bitterly. So, in order to avoid being tormented, the exorcised propitiate their spirits; they worship them in reality, and this gives birth to *a new religion* totally different from ancestrolatry, which has its rites and its duties.

As already pointed out, the exorcised has *his own altar*, in his hut. It is the forked branch round which a circle of raised clay is carefully maintained, and, regularly smeared. He puts his offerings there, principally tobacco. The snuff box is deposited there. Does he want snuff? He enters the hut clapping his hands, saluting his spirits, and, taking the box, throws a pinch of it at the foot of the branch, and says : " You ! Ngoni, you see that I have not stolen ! I first gave you your share. " His wife will do the same. This is a " mhamba ". — When ready to undertake a journey, he will come to the altar, sit on his ankles (if it is a woman she kneels down) and take leave of the spirits. Holding his assagay, and his manono root, he says: " Good-bye, Ba-Ngoni ! This hut is yours; keep it well ! I go to such and such a place ", and he asks them to bless his journeying. On his return he will inform the spirits, that he has succeeded in his trip. If he is sick, and the bones have revealed that the disease has been caused by the spirits, he again

comes to the altar, and says: "You! Ba-Ngoni why are you angry with me?" These acts of worship are not only performmed at the altar. Wherever he may be, before drinking beer, the exorcised will pour out a little for his spirits. He will also throw a little food for them before eating. This will be *a daily worship*, much more constant and individual than the rites of ancestrolatry, a real communion with the spirits who, after having tormented the exorcist, have become his benefactors, giving him the power of healing others and of thus making money! There is much more religiosity in exorcised than in ordinary people.

3) Development of subliminal faculties.

All these nervous crises, natural or provoked, the double psychological existence which is fostered by them, the regular participation in the exorcism of others, generally greatly injure the mind of the exorcised; they have an extraordinary look, something wild, out of their senses. You hear them sometimes groaning, or emitting a sudden cry without any reason. This nervous shaking may pass away and they may return to their normal state, but it may be that if they possess those strange virtual mental powers, which modern physiology calls subliminal, and which are more or less dormant in every individual, these faculties will suddenly develop and the exorcised will really become a magician. A faculty of *double sight* may reveal itself. Or he will become a *diviner*, either by extasy or by bone throwing (See Letter D). Or he will be a *wonder-worker*, a *prophet*, etc. Mholombo, who was an extraordinarily acute woman, had possessed all these gifts. She could discover wizards: one night, crossing the Mabota country, she met one of the indunas of the chief accompanied by two other men, leading his own wife to the marsh, in order to eat her. They were acting in their capacity of wizards (See Letter C). Mholombo knew them at once and said to them: "No use eating her. Her meat is bitter sour." Terrified, the wizards fled

and confessed their guilt next morning! I have related in the Bulletin de la Société Neuchâteloise de Géographie, of 1910, how she received divinatory bones from her possessing spirit, prophesied the arrival of missionaries, showed up the man who had stolen £ 8 to the Mpfumo chief, was given the power to cross the Nkomati river by walking on the water, etc. By this same power Shidzabalane was able to leave his body, and to go and dwell in his own shadow (p. 339). We will again refer to the profession of magician when dealing with witchcraft.

4) The society of the exorcised.

If the power of an exorcised becomes very great, if he succeeds in his cures, all his *mathwaza* join him, and he becomes the founder of a school. He initiates new rites, discovers more powerful drugs, and so attracts to him patients from all parts. We have seen that five or six schools existed northward of Lourenço Marques, in the Mabota and Nondwane countries. Mboza might have originated a new one, having already cured two patients.

Each school of exorcists celebrates *an annual feast*, in winter, at the close of the harvest season, a feast to which all the disciples of the master are summoned. This is the rite of the *renewal of the drugs*, which we have already noticed as a medical practice, in cases of ordinary medicine-men. Mboza, who was the favourite of Ñwatshulu, was entrusted with the organisation of the feast. He stood at the great entrance of the village and welcomed the exorcised coming with their empty calabashes; on their arrival, each of them gave two shillings, or half a crown, or a mat, or a fowl for the master : this was their annual fee. Next day they all gathered fuel and burnt the drugs in broken pots, two or three mathwazana around each fire. Then they all inhaled the smoke through reeds, and drew in the froth of the phuphumana and psekamafura decoction from the gobo basin. In the evening the old inhabitants began to grind the carbonised roots, and Mboza filled the calabashes of the disci-

ples with the new protective medicines, after which dancing began, each of the exorcised singing his own song as well as the universally known refrains, such as : "Vuka Mungoni", etc. This was a great day of rejoicing !

As already pointed out, great rivalry exists between these schools. The professional hatred is pushed to its last limits amongst magicians; they not only *test* their colleagues, entering their huts during the night, but they steal each other's drugs. I have been told how Sindondondo overcame Khongosa. Sindondondo was a wonderful man, dwelling on the Western border of the Nkomati, at Shifukundju. He had disappeared for two years or three, and was considered as dead, but he unexpectedly reappeared saying he had inhabited the bottom of the sea during the whole time. There he had not eaten anything : he was like a fish. The chiefs of that country, under the water, had given him his great drug called *ndzundzu*, and he returned home bringing with him a bunch of the precious roots. His people welcomed him and made a feast on his return. He then became a great magician, and exorcised a number of people. He and his only wife were the sole inhabitants of his village; as regards his food he was very particular, eating only mealies of the preceding year, and drinking no beer. (The exorcised often observe special, individual alimentary taboos). His forked pole was outside, on his hubo, not in the hut, and when he went on a journey, he ordered a neighbour to keep watch over his drugs and his fowls. Should some other man try to enter his village, he would find it full of enormous snakes, surrounding the magic branch. Khongosa, who inhabited the district called Nkanyen, on the Eastern border of the Nkomati, wanted to possess the marvellous *ndzundzu* drug; so one night he crossed the river and tried to steal it. But Sindondondo was on his guard, his protective charms were acting. They caught his rival who was *shwela*, viz., imprisoned till after sunrise. Sindondondo behaved magnanimously : "Why, my friend (gobelakulori), did you not come in daylight to ask for my medicine ? I would have given it to you ! I could cover you with shame now, and show all the people

what kind of an exorcist you are ! But I have pity on you ! Go home. " And he released him. Mboza was fully persuaded of the truth of this story.

It may happen that a disciple emancipates himself and founds a new society of the exorcised; this is, of course, very disagreeable to his master, because the new doctor will start a dangerous competition and refuse to pay any more fees to his initiator; he will proclaim himself as his superior. So the old gobela goes to his altar and prays his Ngoni gods to strike the drugs of his rival with inefficacy. This prayer is heard and the young gobela is obliged to ask for forgiveness, and to pay a fine of £1 in order to obtain success in his future cures. He may perhaps *succeed* his master, but only when the latter is dead.

5) Funeral rites of the exorcised.

The burial of the exorcised is attended by other mathwazana, by his disciples, if he was an exorcist, and special rites are observed for his funeral. The corpse is taboo. It must be covered with ochre. The grave is smeared with clay, and the body is not laid down on the side, but is put in the sitting position, the hand holding the assagay, or the hatchet, which the deceased was using when dancing and singing the songs of exorcism. A bunch of *shibowa*, an Urticaria growing in the water, is placed on his head : " *This is to cool him*, because the poor head has been so tired, it has suffered so much from anguish, pain, excitement ! " The grass coming from the water also appears *to cool the spirits*, who will thus remain in the grave, and not trouble other people. Moreover a little hut is built on the grave itself, as was the case for Sokis (I. p. 141), with the same intent, to protect the exorcised against heat and fatigue. If the deceased was not only a disciple but a master, his drugs will be stored in the hut till the adjudication of the inheritance (I. p. 204). The most clever of his followers, the one who best knows the use of these charms, will dance on the grave, all his companions clapping their hands to encourage him, and, when the mourning

is ended, he will "raise the drugs", burning them as is done at the annual feast and will eventually succeed his master.

6) Conclusion on Possessions.

Cases of posssession, such as those which happen amongst the Thonga, are met with in a great many other countries. A Swiss missionary, the Rev. Rusillon, working in the Paris Mission in Madagascar, has drawn attention to practices very similar to these, called the Tromba amongst Hovas. It is impossible not to note the striking resemblance between the Thonga disease and that of the demoniacs of the New Testament. Hearing the story of the madman in Gadara, whose spirit called itself Legion, the Natives at once identify the phenomenon, and say: "These demoniacs had psikwembu".

Those psychological phenomena certainly bear a morbid character. The fact that they generally appear under an epidemic form is significant. It has been noticed that a similar epidemic broke out in populations which had been weakened by the sufferings of a long war, when the nervous resistance had been reduced by privations. Cannot the progress of Alcoholism, together with the desintegration of the old social order caused by the influence of European civilisation, account for the spread of the disease amongst the Ba-Ronga in the last forty years?

Whilst not pretending to analyse these phenomena scientifically and fully, I will only add two remarks:

1) For the Jews, phenomena of possession were due to *evil spirits*, devilish agencies, martyrising poor humanity, and they were healed by the power of the real and true God. Dualism prevailed in their religious conceptions. This idea of dualism is altogether absent from the Thonga belief. South African Bantu have not yet reached that stage of religion where the antagonistic ideas of right and wrong are transported into the domain of divinity, thus originating the true gods and the devils. Possessing spirits are not worse than ancestor-gods. They all are non-moral. They can bless and curse, and their moral character is not taken into account at all.

2) The progress of modern psychology gives the explanation of many of these phenomena. The disease of the personality which manifests itself by the presence of two psychological consciences in the mind is well-known; the hypnotic suggestion which the tambourine

players exert on their victims, without knowing it, sufficiently explains the origin of the disease, and the kind of life led by the exorcised is well devised to develop their mediumistic faculties. So many of the so-called miracles of possession are easily accounted for. However it would be pretentious to exclude, a priori, any possibility of external spiritual influences in those phenomena. There is one very striking fact at which Natives greatly wonder. These patients, as soon as they put themselves under Christian influence, are healed at once and for ever. We have, amongst our converts, exorcists who had acquired great fame, and who tell, with beaming eyes, how they have been delivered from their terrible anguish by their new faith. For, whatever may be the success they obtained in their career of exorcists, their condition was a disease, a painful disease and they are extremely glad to have been delivered from it. This fact must certainly be remembered when trying to arrive at an explanation of possessions.

C. WITCHCRAFT

I have pointed out, in an article published in the Report of the S. A. A. A. S., of 1906, how little comprehension most of the White people have of this important but difficult subject. A confusion is almost always made between the *witches* and the *witch-doctors*. In French the word *sorcier* and in English the term *sorcerer*, indiscriminately used for those who cast spells and for magicians, leads to the same misconception. I think, in order to avoid errors that it is imperative, first of all clearly to distinguish between *Black Magic* and *White Magic*. These adjectives, black and white, are not employed in this connection amongst South African Natives, but Thonga certainly do make the distinction and possess different terms for each. Black magic is called *Buloyi*; it is the criminal magical practices by which wizards and witches bewitch innocent folk. Buloyi is a crime. White Magic is called *Bungoma* and means the magical operations of those who fight with evil influences and use their powers for the benefit, and not for the ruin, of their countrymen. The *mungoma* (magician) is consequently the great enemy of the *noyi* (caster of spells). It may be that the power

of both is essentially of the same nature. But the use they make of it is exactly the reverse, the one exerting it in the interest of Society, the other against it. So we will have to deal with these two categories of men in two separate paragraphs.

I. *Black Magic (Buloyi).*

Buloyi, an abstract noun of the bu-ma class, as well as *noyi* (pl. *baloyi*), derivates from the verb *ku loya* (Ro.), *lowa* (Dj.), to bewitch. This word is very interesting. It seems to have been known already in the Ur-Bantu (Comp. Meinhof, Grundriss, p. 173) and exists in Swaheli, Herero, Xosa, Suto, Thonga, etc. Strange to say the stem is absent in Zulu, where it is replaced by *thakata*. In Thonga its most common meaning is to bewitch. But the word is also applied to the act of a man who marries his near cousin (I. p. 244). Moreover Nkolele, describing to me the sacrifice in the sacred wood and speaking of the *ntukulu* who prepares to steal the offering, said: "Here is the *noyi*, ready to come and steal the beer... " I also heard the crocodile stone, used by the chief as a charm to protect his life, called *buloyi bya hosi*, the magical power of the chief (I. p. 366); these instances show that the word loya is sometimes, though rarely, used in a more general sense. However its technical meaning is and remains: to injure or to kill by enchantments. Who are these baloyi, and what crime do they perpetrate?

1) The Baloyi.

The *baloyi*, or people who have the evil eye, are numerous in each tribe. Their power is hereditary, but, strange to say, it is transmitted by the mother and not by the father. Therefore should a polygamist have three wives, one of whom is a noyi, all the children he will have from that "noyi" wife will be baloyi, and his other children will not be such. That dreadful power is sucked from their mother's breast when they are still

infants, but it must be strengthened by special medicines to be really efficient. The " noi " mother chooses one of her sons, to whom she does not dispense these drugs, and he will be free from buloyi. Her aim in doing so is that, should one of her offspring later on be accused of having killed by witchcraft and be called to pass through the ordeal (of which we shall speak hereafter), the immune child will be sent in his place to undergo the trial. The chief will consent to that substitution, as it is well known that all the sons of a " noi " woman are equally baloyi. But the intoxicating medicine of the ordeal will have no effect on the substitute, and therefore the true noyi will escape !

Those baloyi know each other. They form a kind of *secret society* amongst the tribe, and they assemble — with their spiritual bodies — during the night to eat human flesh in the desert. There they form a true " hubo ", that is, a debating assembly. They discuss what they will do to injure property or destroy life. They fight sometimes. If one of them is defeated in the discussion (saying, for instance, that there should be no mealies this year, a proposal which is not accepted by the others) they condemn him to pay a fine, and the fine will consist in a human body, which he will have to provide, after having killed it by witchcraft. It might be that he will choose his own child to bring it to the horrible banquet ! It shows that there are powerful and less powerful baloyi, and they are constantly trying to overcome each other in finding out more efficient charms.

As regards the other members of the tribe who are not witches, or wizards, they are considered by them as stupid beings who do not deserve a better fate than that of being eaten wholesale by the clever baloyi ! These man-eaters are the truly intelligent, the superior, the wise ones ! (Ba tlharihile). They are also called for that reason " bahanyi " — " those who live ", no doubt because they possess a kind of superior life. However they are greatly feared by the others, and when a boy wants to marry, the main thing to consider in the choice of his wife is that she does not belong to a family

of witches. The accusation ; " You are a noyi " is the gravest insult which a man can make to another.

The activity of the baloyi is almost entirely nocturnal. That is the reason why they are sometimes called by the euphemism : " ba busiku " — " the men of night ". In fact, they possess the faculty of getting out of themselves, during the night ; they fly, have large wings, and, after having got out of their huts by the crown of grass which covers its top, or by the closed door, they fly through the air and go to their horrible work. The little flying flames which are seen sometimes in the marshes, the will-o'-the-wisp (1), are considered as being one of the forms under which they go. These flames may also be seen on the back of the hippotami, during their fight with the batimba hunters (p. 61), or high in the air, following the paths over the heads of the people.

Two questions arise here. Does the Native mind think that *a true unsheathing* of the personality takes place when the baloyi go to their nocturnal expedition, or that they get out of the hut themselves, as entire beings, with their ordinary "ego"? As far as I could make out, the Suto theory is different from the Thonga view. The Ba-Suto say : The wizard is going entire, soul and body. Nothing remains on the mat, when he has departed for his nocturnal ride ! He throws charms on the other inhabitants of the hut, and they sleep so heavily that they do not notice anything. The Thonga speak differently. According to them, the noyi is but a part of the personality. When he flies away, his " ntjhuti ", his shadow, remains behind him, lying down on the mat. But it is not truly the body which remains. It appears as such only to the stupid non-initiated. In reality what remains is a *wild beast*, the one with which the noyi has chosen to identifyhimself. This fact has been disclosed to me

(1) Amongst Christian Natives you will find some who believe that the will-o'-the-wisps are the spirits of the deceased which come back on the earth. But I strongly suspect this idea of being of European origin. For the Bantu the ghosts of their ancestors, which are their gods, appear sometimes, but only under the form of snakes, as explained, around the graves, near the village in which they lived, and the will-o'-the-wisps are the *baloyi*.

by the following striking confession of S. Gana, a very intelligent Nkuna. " Suppose ", he said, " my father is a noyi and I am not. I want to marry a certain girl because I love her. My father knows that she is a noyi because they know each other, and he tells me : " Don't do that ! She is *clever ;* you will repent ! " However, I persist in my idea. He urges me to drop that plan, and threatens me with great misfortune. I marry her. One night, my father enters my hut and awakens me. He says to me : ' What did I tell you ! Look ! Your wife has gone ! ' I look at her place and find her sleeping calmly — ' No. Here she is. ' — ' It is not she ! She is away ! Take this assagai and stab her. — 'No, father, I dare not. ' — ' Do, I say ! ' And he puts the assegai in my hand and makes me violently hurt her leg. A cry, the cry of a wild beast, is heard. And a hyena appears instead of my wife, a hyena which deposits its " faeces ", because it is frightened, and which escapes from the hut howling. My father gives me some powder to swallow and I shall be able to see the baloyi and their ways and habits. He leaves me — very much trembling from fear — and goes home. When the sun is going to appear, I hear a noise like that of the wind in the branches, and suddenly something falls down from the top of the hut near me. It is my wife. She lies down sleeping, but her leg shows a wound, the wound that had been made in the hyena ! "

From this dramatic story it must be inferred that, in the idea of the Ba-Thonga, there is truly an unsheathing of the personality into two when the noyi goes to its nightly work.

A second question arises, which is this : As the baloyi lead a double existence, a day-light one, when they are but men, and a nightly one, when they perform their work as witches, are they aware, during the day, of what they have done during the night ? In other words, are they conscious of their doings as witches ? The question is difficult to answer, as there does not seem to be a clear idea on this point in the Native mind. The old, genuine conception is that a noyi *does not know what he is doing* ; he is not even aware that he is noyi as long as he has not been revealed as such by the means which we shall

explain later on. Therefore he is unconscious. His nightly activity is unknown to him when he has come back to his daily ordinary life. For instance, my informants assure me that a man might have sent a crocodile to kill another one, during his noyi existence, but he will be the first one to show sympathy to the poor wounded one, and to be sorry for this sad accident. And he will be amazed, when the diviner points to him as having caused the death by his buloyi, of which he was in perfect ignorance. But it seems as if the baloyi, who have long practised their horrible tricks, are aware and even proud of their doings, and therefore more or less conscious of their double life. Some of them go even further : they renounce their evil deeds and become magicians, using the knowledge they have acquired to baffle the enchantments of other baloyi, as we shall see.

But let us hear what are the dreadful acts which they commit under their baloyi form.

2) The Crimes of the Baloyi

(a) The baloyi, first of all, are *thieves*. This is the least criminal aspect of their activity. They steal mostly mealies or the products of the fields. They empty the ground-nuts of their contents (p. 12). The magicians have a kind of medicine with which they plaster their mealie cobs in the gardens, and the noyi, when he wants to tear them from the stalk, remains prisoner on the spot, unable to draw his hand away from the cob! But, what is even more curious, the baloyi of a country assemble to make up an army and go to fight with the baloyi of another one, in order to deprive them of their mealies and bring them into their own fields. For instance, in 1900, there was a great war between the baloyi of Mpfumu, near Lourenço Marques, and those of the peninsula of Inyack, at the entrance of Delagoa Bay. That year the Kafir beans were plentiful at Mpfumu, and it was explained by the fact that the Mpfumu baloyi had had the victory over their Inyack enemies. They owed their success to the following trick : they gathered

any number of seeds of the little cucumber, called nkakana, and made with them a kind of enormous ladder, which was suspended midway between sky and sea; upon it they crossed the 20 or the 30 miles of the bay of Delagoa and stole all the Kafir beans of Inyack. (1) Should a tempest have uprooted trees and broken branches, people are sure to say : Here the " army (yimpi) of baloyi" has passed as a terrific storm during the night.

b) But the great crime of the baloyi is that of *killing*. They are murderers, and all the more to be feared as they act unconsciously, without being seen or known. Two motives inspire their crimes — hatred and jealousy. Should one of them have been offended, he is sure to revenge himself by putting to death his enemy. During the night he escapes from his hut (as we have seen above), he opens his wings and flies directly to the dwelling of the man he hates. But the habitation of that man is well protected; there is all round it a spiritual fence made up of charms, various medicines which close the kraal against any invasion of witches. How must he act to perpetrate his crime? He has first made an agreement with another noyi residing in that village, and who has wrought an opening in that spiritual fence, similar to one of the small holes in the material one ! He then gets into the kraal, tries to penetrate into the hut by the door, finds it closed, beats it and, being unable to enter this way, flies to the crown of the hut and descends through it into the hut of the enemy, calmly sleeping on

(1) In one of these expeditions to Inyak Islands the baloyi of the Movumbi district wanted to buy food from their colleagues beyong the Bay. A certain woman, who was a great noyi, took her daughter-in-law with her, but the latter was not a noyi. However she was led through the air, along the nkankana ladder, to the village of Magilankinsin, a headman of Inyak. This man refused to accept her as she was ignorant of the buloyi art, and he sent her back home. In the mean time the husband, Midlalen, noticed that his wife was not sleeping in the hut. When she reappeared in the morning he asked her : "Where did you go" — "To Inyaka". — "Indeed ?" — " Yes ! saw everything there". — " How did you go ? " — " I do not know. " — " How did you return ? " — "I do not know " — " Have you seen Magilankinsin ? " — " Yes ! " The husband suggested that his mother had played this trick by her buloyi and he chased her away from his village Mboza tells the story as absolutely authentic, and adds " these facts occurred some ten years ago. "

his mat. Then he proceeds to the bewitching operation, and the poor bewitched man is condemned to die! "O loyiwile," —" he has been bewitched" ; "ku sa ntjhuti ntsena," — "his shadow only remains." They say also the "nthumbu," the corpse only has been left, his true self has been stolen and eaten. "Ba mu pepulile", they have ravished him, (like a feather taken away by the wind). He will get up in the morning, die some days later, but what will die is only his shadow. He himself has been killed during that frightful night. He has been eaten already! Or he will become mad (lihlanyi) and people will say: "The living have had the better of him" — " Ba mu kotile bahanyi". Here we find again, under an even more mysterious form, the idea of the duality of human personality. How it is possible that a man who has still to live some days or months may be considered as already eaten up entirely, I do not pretend to explain. Such is the Native idea, at any rate. One of my informants tried to overcome the difficulty by saying that, what the noyi is taking with him to eat, is the inside, the bowels; the external frame only remains, and the man will die soon ! Most of the Natives, when you show them the absurdity of the idea, laugh and that is all.

In order to gain his criminal ends the noyi may resort to various means : he may point at his enemy *with the index finger*, which is a common bewitching procedure in many nations. If, later on, you are overtaken by misfortune, you will remember that so and so has " shown you with the finger " (komba hi litiho), and will suspect him of having cast a spell over you. (Comp. I. p. 237). Or he may obtain a hold on you by *taking your own blood*, if this has been, per chance, shed on the ground, and using it as a means of bewitching you ; (a ku loyela ha yone). Hence the precaution universally taken of covering one's blood with earth, should any have dripped from a wound (p. 337). But the five great means which a noyi has at his disposal are the following : ruma, mitisa, matshelwa, ntshutshu and mpfulo.

The *ruma* (to send) consists in sending either a crocodile, or a lion, or more often a snake, to the place where the enemy is

going to pass. He will be killed or wounded. Remember the story of Gebuza whose nose was torn off by a hyena : this is a typical case of ruma. In Maputju, the heathen accused the converts of bewitching them by means of the owls which took shelter under the roof of the chapel ! In Khosen also the Christians were charged with having sent a crocodile from Nkomati River into the Sokotiba lake to kill those who refused to be converted to Christianity ! If the noyi does not wish to kill, he may only send antelopes to destroy the fields and eat the sweet potatoes. Even in the Christian village of Shiluvane, during the days when the "duykers" are plentiful, and become a nuisance, you might hear somebody saying : "*They* are sending us their duykers!" Who are *they ?* Mystery ! *They* are the baloyi ! But do not call them by their name !

The *mitisa* (ku *mita*, to swallow, ku *mitisa*, to make somebody swallow) is the only one of these five means of bewitching which is used during the day. It consists in giving to a visitor something to eat or to drink in which certain drugs have been introduced. The mealie pap or the beer seem perfectly normal, but, owing to the enchantments of buloyi, as soon as you have swallowed them, they are transformed, in your throat, into any kind of harmful beast, which threatens to suffocate you, and gives rise to a disease and perhaps produces death ! You will have swallowed in this way a snake, a beetle of the Copris genus, one of those strange dung-eaters, a big fly, or certain kinds of flesh of animals. The great effort of the magician to whom you will apply for treatment will be to remove these foreign bodies, and, when you vomit, they will show you with triumph a bit of bone, a tooth, that famous beetle, or other objects which they had previously and cleverly introduced themselves. There is a medicine which Natives like to have inoculated into their tongue, and which has the wonderful property of forcing the bewitched food to reveal its true character when you eat it. If you have been treated with it, you will hear the cracking of the elytra of the beetle, and at once be able to spit out of your mouth the death-containing food !

The *matshelwa* (ku tshela, to throw) are not only these foreign

bodies which the noyi introduces into you by means of giving you poisoned food, but it may be *tinguti* (bloods) poured on you during the night in such quantity that the floor of the hut will be found quite wet in the morning.

The *ntchutchu* (ku tchutcha, to inspire) is another way of getting rid of an enemy. It is a *bewitching of the will* by which the noyi inspires his enemy with the idea of leaving the country. Without motive, the poor bewitched person prepares to go to Johannesburg, or anywhere else. There he will become the prey of other baloyi, who will kill him. When a boy dies in the mines, as hundreds of them do, his parents think : — "He has been killed by such and such a disease." But the author of his death is not in Johannesburg, he is here at home; it is the noyi who hated him and made him go by "ntchutchu."

The *mpfulo* is still worse. That word which comes from the verb ku pfula, to open, designates the mysterious power which the baloyi possess to *open* any kind of things. One of them, a Nkuna, named Ñwayekeyeke, had charms to open *the kraals of oxen;* during the night, he would come into a village holding a tail of hyena daubed over with peculiar medicines, and would throw on all the inhabitants a deep sleep. Then, waving the tail, he would open the kraal and call the cattle out. Flying with the rapidity of the wind, he would then be followed by all the herd bewitched by him. When tired, he would jump on a tree and rest a while, fearing lest the oxen might run over him and tread him down, as they were irresistibly attracted by the tail. Should people see him on his way, he would say : "Take an ox, I give it to you," until he reached his village and housed the stolen oxen in his own kraal. But there are other kinds of *mpfulo :* the power of *opening the hut,* of putting away the husband sleeping there without waking him, and of committing adultery with his wife. However the great *mpfulo* consists in *opening a man.* The following story will show how that criminal act is accomplished. Some fifty years ago, a young man called Nkokana, the uncle of my informant, astonished the whole tribe by his splendid way of dancing like the chameleon. The circumcision school was just over, and on the last

day of it all the boys had to enter solemnly into the kraal of the chief, performing the ceremony which has been described I. p 92 and is called ku nenga. One of the men of the tribe, who was a noyi, was struck by the perfect performance of Nkokana, and, filled with jealousy, he resolved to bewitch him. As the boys were going home that same day, happy to be at the end of all their trials, they had to cross a thick wood; suddenly a voice was heard calling : "Nkokana!" The boy said : "Yes, I am coming, "and he went to the place from where the voice came. But he found nobody. Instead of going back to his companions who were waiting for him, he ran all through the bush, as possessed by a kind of madness, always following the voice, but with no success. The night passed. He came back home entirely worn out, a shadow only of himself, and died some days later. He had been "opened up" by the witch. When such bewitching takes place it is probable that the noyi wants to enslave his victim, and make him work for him.

c) This leads us to the last of the crimes of the baloyi. Their object may not be to kill their victims but *to use them as their servants*, for ploughing their fields, cutting their wood, and so on. One day footprints of a leopard were seen in a mealie garden near the Shiluvane station. People were convinced that this was nothing but a bewitched person, sent there during the night under the form of an animal (1) to serve the owner of the field; it is said that the baloyi, when assembled in their hubo, choose those whom they like amongst the victims they have overcome by the ntshutshu, by their magical inspiration, and change them into leopards, hyenas and snakes, compelling them either to till the fields, or to uproot mealies in the gardens of others, and to "lead" (byisa) the stems and plant them in the gardens of baloyi. A Nkuna of Thabina once pretented having witnessed such a

(1) The relation established between animals and baloyi is pushed even further in Maputju. My colleague, the late Rev. Audéoud, heard of baloyi who really consider themselves the possessors of certain beasts. One of them owned a wild boar. A hunter killed the son of that wild boar and the noyi bewitched him as he considered he had a vested right of property in the son as well as in the father!

case of nocturnal theft, — and he was expelled from the country because, as people said, he could not know of such deeds if he were not himself a noi.

To be fair towards the wizards I must add that there are also some *good baloyi*, viz., baloyi who use their power to bless. They can do so when sent by the ancestor-spirits to increase the produce of the fields, if the prayer of the luma day has been heard by the gods (I. p. 369). In this case the wizards are said to have *loyela masimu*, bewitched the fields to make them produce more (loyela, applicative derivative of loya). This seems to show that baloyi are more or less subject to the ancestral gods. It may happen also that if somebody acts kindly towards a noyi, this noyi will take him under his protection, and prevent his comrades from doing harm to his friend. But these are rare occurrences, and the baloyi are, and remain, criminals in the ideas of the Thonga.

Stealing, killing, enslaving, these are the principal crimes of these maleficent beings. But they can also cause any other kind of harm to their infortunate victims. One of them once complained to me of having been deprived of the power of begetting by the tricks of a noyi uncle : his wife was pregnant and the wizard wanted to act in such a way on the offspring as to change him into snake, or a hare, or a quail, or a duyker, so that the mother would die on the day of the birth. (I. p. 490. Note 11).

II. *White Magic and Magicians*

1) Difference between Magicians and Wizards.

As previously stated, the power which the magicians claim to possess is perhaps not essentially different from that of the baloyi. They even sometimes boast of being baloyi themselves, baloyi more powerful than the ordinary witches, and that they are thus able to discover them and to baffle all their tricks. So Mathuza, one of the most celebrated Ronga witch-doctors, used to say:

"I am the great Noyi! I am the one who kills. I can fly. So I know them all and I disclose them". But magicians absolutely differ from the wizards in four ways, at least :

1) Their activity is not secret, nocturnal and more or less unconscious. They act openly, in the full light, during the day, and do not hide their magical powers ; on the contrary, they make a show of them, covering themselves with any amount of charms ; most of them wearing tingoya and smearing themselves with ochre (p. 83).

2) They all undergo a preparation, or pass through an initiation, differing according to the various kinds of magic they practise. So they possess, so to speak, letters patent, either because they have been aggregated to the society of their fellow-magicians (as is the case for medicine-men, exorcists, and throwers of bones), or because they have found new and powerful drugs during an absence, or a pretended sojourn, in the sea, in the desert, or elsewhere

3) Whilst baloyi are said to use *tingati* (bloods), poisons, the magicians employ *miri*, i. e., medicinal herbs or objects, drugs which, however, are all meant to possess special powers. I do not say "supernatural" powers, as the notion conveyed by this word cannot clearly exist amongst people who have not yet the notion of Nature. The stronger the miri, the stronger the magician. — In addition to their drugs, they certainly believe themselves endowed with personal power due to the development of their faculties of double sight, etc., and which they also attribute to the spirits (ancestor-gods) from whom they have inherited their drugs.

4) The last but not least difference: magicians are the helpers and upholders of the social order, and not criminals attempting to destroy it. They foretell the future, cure diseases, prevent misfortune of all kinds, fight against baloyi, and are regularly consulted by the Native Court in order to detect wizards.

2) Various categories of magicians.

Some of them specialise in one part of the immense domain of magic, but some pretend to practise the magical arts in all their diversity.

1) Those whose activity bears a less magic character are the *ñanga* (yin-tin), or *ba-muri*, whom we met with when dealing with the medical art (Compare Chapter I. the Medicine-men).

2) Those who have passed through the exorcism and have beeome exorcists. They are called *gobela*, and the story of their initiation has been sufficiently explained in Chapter II.

3) Those called *mungoma*, magicians, properly speaking, who can guess and accomplish wonders, fight the baloyi, make the rain fall, act on Heaven, etc., even if there has been no story of exorcism in their previous career.

4) Those whose principal qualification is the power to detect baloyi, and who are called for that reason *shinusa*, "smellers-out".

5) The bone-throwers *(ba-bula)* whom we shall describe in Chapter IV.

The priests, *ba ku hahla*, do not enter into any of these categories, their proper activity being of a totally different character : they have recourse to Religion and not to Magic.

3) Some Thonga Magicians.

If I think of the various magicians with whom I came in contact, I notice that very few limited themselves to the medical art alone : *Sam Ngwetsa* and *Kokolo* only did this. The aim of the magician is to combine as many branches of the business as possible. — *Mankhelu*, with his forked branch, was a medicine-man of the highest rank, owing to his calabashes containing a mixture of all the most powerful drugs, salted with Rivimbi's charms of the sea. He was a magician, being a rain-maker, a detector of baloyi and especially a successful bone-thrower, but he seemed to altogether ignore the art of exorcism. — *Makasana*,

on the contrary, a Thonga from the Leydenburg district, had acquired his power after having passed through the exorcism and had obtained the drugs of his exorcist. This had made of him a regular *mungoma*. Round his neck he wore three necklaces of half transparent yellow beads, between which were small square lizard skin bags, timfisa, containing : 1) drugs against snake bites ; 2) charms against the baloyi ; 3) the *maringo ya tilo*, the charms of Heaven. Birds' claws and a crocodile's tooth also hung round his neck ; his hair was elongated, the *tingoya* radiating in all directions, and in the very middle, on the top of his head, he wore a little chain, in the form of a narrow turban, to which a brass cartridge was fixed : his snuff box, comfortably resting on his thick thatch ! Possessing all these drugs Makasana was at the same time exorcist, witch-doctor, medicine-man, and magician of Heaven. The last qualification was perhaps the principal one for him ; he told me that he had to fight against his colleagues, who wanted to test him by means of their own charms. — "At noon", he said, "when the sky is quite clear, I see a little cloud appearing over my head, quite black. The lightning bird is in it, and wants to kill me, having been sent by one of my enemies. Then I pour a little of the medicine of Heaven in the palm of my hand ; when I see the bird moving its wings and ready to rush down to me, I blow a little of my drug towards the cloud and the bird will come and fall quite near me powerless. Then I take it, I cut it through the middle. I take a little of the heart, of the eyes, I crush the bones, I make a powder with all these ingredients, and this is my great medicine. With one of the bones, I make a flute, I put a little powder in it, and, when a thunderstorm breaks, I go outside without danger and conjure the lightning by playing on my flute, etc." (p. 291).

Mathuza, the magician of Nondwane to whom I have just made an allusion, was essentially a detector of baloyi. — So was also *Nwashibandjime*, the great Nkuna magician, a splendid man, tall, his eyes beaming with a kind of supernatural light. I once saw him, after having performed the "smelling out" rite, point out a woman with the tail he always carried with him, an enor-

mous tail fixed on a handle richly decorated with beads and copper wire. This tail, which is one of the most common attributes of the mungoma is generally a gnu tail. It is said that when a mother gnu has dropped her offspring, she beats it (phyita) with her tail and thus gives the new-born gnu the necessary strength to walk and follow its mother. Hence the peculiar magic use of the gnu tail. In its very middle certain drugs are hidden which possess a revelatory virtue: the magician puts his nose right amongst the hair before pronouncing his sentence and beating (phyita) the noyi. Ñwashihandjime is said to have disappeared from his village for months, and to have come back from the desert emaciated but full of new magical powers. I once tried to draw his attention to things more spiritual than his art and his drugs. He gazed at me with wild eyes, as if he were unable to follow my demonstration; suddenly he emitted a cry very similar to hiccough and turned his back. (Hiccoughing is a well-known symptom, shewing either that one has been bewitched by "mitisa", or that one possesses a magical power).

At the station of Shiluvane I once made an inventory of the charms of another Nkuna magician. In his hair the man wore a brass bracelet and some rings, a necklace with a sixpence, all these objects having been inherited from his father who was himself a mungoma; moreover he hung round his neck a little piece of the skin of a goat, which had been sacrificed after the death of his father; in this way he tried to acquire and keep the power of his initiator and of his god. Two panther's claws were fixed on his head, pointing towards each other, as if wanting to catch something: this helped him to go and seize (to ba) the wizard in the *vumisa* rite, which I shall now describe. Two empty bladders of goats were swinging amidst his crop of tingoya when he walked, an unmistakable sign that he had cured patients and received goats as reward. The noise they made by hitting against each other "called other goats to come to him". From his neck hung two crocodile's teeth, a piece of buffalo's horn, " psiboho psa nga " — " that which ties me, viz., makes me firm "; another horn which had been broken by a

bullet and in which he kept the *nulu* medicine (p.452), the root of a white sea-weed, used to produce the foam of the *gobo* rite in the exorcism, a goat's horn full of a powder which cures the "burwa" disease. The burwa is the strong Westerly wind in Shiluvane (I. p. 18) which the baloyi are said to use for bewitching through the ears. He rubbed the patient with the horn and placed it near one ear, then near the other, and could cure the bewitched in that way. Another drug, called "rishwala", helped him to acquire many wives, and to have many children; a cock's spur was also worn in order to give him "courage and weight". This mungoma, who called at Shiluvane on the 28th of June 1899, sold me a "kaross" (a rug) made of skins of rock rabbits, a work of the Ba-Pedi, worth £ 6. He had earned it by the practice of his art.

I here give the picture of a true Ronga *gobela*, from Tembe, who once passed through Rikatla with two assistants; he was on his way exorcising the possessed of the land. He looked frightful with all his military and magical attire, his big snake skins, and his gnu tail; he hardly condescended to pronounce a word, maintaining all the time a most dignified demeanour. He was, before everything, an exorcist.

These few descriptions are sufficient to illustrate the composite character of the magicians. There is no end to their charms, and their tricks, but they are certainly in earnest as regards the practice of their art, and are convinced that they are very useful and powerful personages.

III. *The way of dealing with wizards.*

All the power of the magicians is resorted to in order to check the enchantments of the baloyi. Their drugs are used with two objects: protection and cure, the cure consisting mainly in disclosing the wizard.

Phot. A. Borel.

A Ronga « gobela ».

1) Protective means.

The village, as we saw, (I. p. 281) is well protected with *anti-baloyi drugs*. The fence itself, the main entrance and the threshold of the headman's hut, have been magically treated when first built. But the magician, when he thinks it necessary, "revives" the drugs by burning his powder in a little fire on the road which enters the village. This protects the main entrance, and he does the same at the threshold of the headman's hut. The smoke will keep the wizards away. Stones, daubed with the powder, are put in all directions to close the openings.

"These medicines act wonderfully," says Mankhelu. Should a *noyi* succeed in entering the hut, the power of that smoke will be such that he will at once be revealed. Without any clothing, the *noyi* will suddenly be seen there as if dreaming, seeing nothing, knowing nothing. If it is a woman, I will call her husband and show him his wife... 'What are you doing here?' he will say to her. She will not utter a word. Then I will tell him: 'Look here, my friend... I might be hard on you. But I have pity. Do not allow your wife to do anything of the kind again. Pay me one or two oxen, and I will keep silent.' He will consent. Then I beat the woman with my stick. She awakes, and, quite ashamed of being in another hut without any clothing, she will fly away home!" Such is the testimony of Mankhelu, and he is sure of having succeeded more than once!!

Mboza asserted to me that he had witnessed a similar case in Muthiyane (near Rikatla). A woman had been thus "surprised by the rising sun" (shwela, p. 283). She was stark naked and had something red, like fire, on both shoulders: these were the remnants of her wings. Having been overcome by the magical drugs she had been unable to reintroduce these wings into her flesh, and there remained a part of them outside. Every one ran away at this sight, and the chief ordered the woman to be shut up in her hut.

Some magicians use to fight the baloyi by *running through the*

bush during the night and catching them as they flew on their wings of fire. See how Mholombo prevented two wizards from killing a woman (p. 455), and how the exorcised protect themselves by means of the mabophe drug, and by swallowing their nulu powder (p. 452).

2) Means of disclosing the Baloyi.

But should all the protective medicines which surround the village, which have been swallowed by the inhabitants, or by which they have been inoculated, remain without effect, should a serious disease occur, one of those evils which are generally attributed to the baloyi, the first thing to do is to *detect* the culprit. The patient's relatives go *to the diviner* who will cast the bones and discover if the disease is due to witchcraft or not. This consultation is secret, and only preliminary. There are, in the sets of bones employed in the (Thonga) divination, some which represent the *baloyi*, especially the astragalus of the reedbuck, or of the duyker, that small antelope which rambles about during the night, just at the time when the witches operate. Should that bone fall in a certain way near the bone representing the patient, or near his amulets which have been placed on the mat, it shows that his disease is the outcome of buloyi. The name of the noyi will be searched for, and perhaps ascertained, that first day, but the parents of his victim will never dare to accuse him merely on the testimony of the bones. The next step will be to go to the *mungoma*, the magician who "smells out" the *baloyi*.

The magician employs various means to find out a noyi.

a) *The Enchanted Horn.*

In the Murchison Range there is a magician who possesses an enchanted horn, into which he introduces a short twig smeared with an anti-baloyi medicine. Persons suspected of having killed by witchcraft must try to pull the twig out of the horn. The

noyi will be unable to do it, though he may declare, like the others : " I have not killed ". Amongst the Nkuna, the magician, who has succeeded in finding out a wizard, takes his coat and hangs it to a tree as a trophy.

b) *The Enchanted Flute.*

When some one dies and his relatives think he has been bewitched, they can call a certain mungoma who " treats the grave " with his drugs. If he thinks that he has disclosed the noyi, he gives to the bereaved a small flute, telling him to go and play on it in the neighbourhood. This helps not only to detect the wizard but to punish him ; he will die. This rite is called " to play on the little flute (ku yimbelela shinangana) for somebody ".

c) *The rera nyiwa, or ba hungwe.*

Rera nyiwa or *ba hungwe* means to summon an assembly for disclosing wizards. This is done when the chief is sick, or when an epidemic has broken out and threatens the villages. The headman, or sub-chief, assembles all his people and says : " Hungwe ! " (this word is a kind of : " Take care ! "). " The bones have declared it : It is so and so : a woman having two, three or four children... or married twice... or a widow... or a girl... or a man... or a medicine-man..... Cease your enchantments and make the patient live ! We know you ! Do not bring upon him bad influences during the night ! If you do not restore him to health, we shall kill you ! " All the people look at each other and try to discover who is meant by the bones and by the speaker. The rera nyiwa acts as a solemn warning to all the baloyi of the country, and may thus prolong the life of the chief.

d) *The smelling-out procedure.*

But should it be desirable to ascertain the name of the noyi, in order to punish him (for instance, in a case of death, where nothing remains but to avenge oneself on the murderer), the mungoma will proceed to the *shinusa divination*, the regular smelling-out. This can be done in two ways, either by questioning or by ecstasy.

1) *Smelling-out by questioning*. The relatives of the bewitched come to the shinusa, pay him £ 1, and ask him to find out the murderer. He makes them sit down in a half-circle, and, facing them, begins to put some questions to them. They always answer by the word *mamoo*, which means yes, in the language of *bungoma*. Hence the Zulu term of *vumisa* viz., « to make somebody say yes", applied to this ceremony. The *mamoo* is cool or warm, doubtful or convinced, and the clever diviner easily perceives every shade of meaning in that perpetual *mamoo*. He is well aware of all the disputes and hatred between the people and, in his investigation, he draws nearer and nearer to the man of whom the consulting party is thinking. Their *mamoo* becomes bolder. The questions are more precise. At last, when he feels himself agreeing with the consultants, the *mungoma* pronounces the name and lets his tail fall. He is bathed in perspiration after the great strain, and he remains silent, as if he were invulnerable; he has triumphantly " smelt out " the culprit. Next day, relatives of the patient go to the kraal of the noyi, waving branches, dance before him, and say : " Thus you are killing us! " The accused one keeps silent. Then he says : " All right. We shall come to-morrow and consult also our *mungoma*." Both parties then go to another divinator. The scene of "smelling out" is again gone through, and very likely the verdict of the second *mungoma* will confirm that of the first one; the augurs know that they must not contradict each other if they want to maintain their authority, and the terrible tail falls on the head of the accused. As soon as the proof and counterproof have been obtained, the case becomes a judicial one. The plaintiff puts the

matter before the chief, who will not condemn before the guilt of the pretented noyi is confirmed by the ordeal, the trial by the famous philter called *mondjo*.

2) *Smelling-out by ecstasy* partakes more or less of the character of the rera nyiwa. All the people have been assembled in the Capital. The chief wants to collect together all the baloyi of the land. The diviner arrives, decked out with amulets and all the insignia of his power. In his hands he carries his magical tail, by way of a whip, and an assagay. He begins to dance, the crowd seated all round him, clapping their hands (wombela), and singing a chorus special to the occasion :

> Ñwashongana khalo ! Famba u ya teka, u ya teka, mungoma !
> Beautiful dancer of slender figure ! Seek for it, seek for it, diviner !

He goes on dancing ; like Pythia of old he gets into a condition of excessive nervous excitement, ecstasy, inspiration. He brandishes his tail, dilates his nostrils, inhales the air on all sides, as if to smell out the spot from whence the evil influence has emanated, then takes to his heels in a certain direction, the assembly still clapping their hands and singing. He approaches a hut, enters, and triumphantly plants his assagay in one corner. A hole is dug in that spot and the discovery made — just where so and so placed his wooden pillow when retiring to rest for the night — of a small gourd full of blood, packets of doubtful objects in connection with enchantments, and perhaps a snake. It is quite possible that the diviner may have previously hidden these articles ; nevertheless he carries them exultingly away ; they are the wizards'weapons, the "bloods" (tingati) which they throw over their victims at night.

The shinusa returns to the chief's village, who is very angry and orders him to go and show these objects to their owner. Then the magician, making a sign to the crowd to stop singing, will go and throw the articles in front of the occupant of the hut to put him to shame before the whole assembly. The mysterious charms, the noyi's gourd, must in every case be consumed by fire, and then the sickness and deaths in the village ought to be arrested.

e) *The Mondjo ordeal.*

As already pointed out, the last, the supreme means for unmasking baloyi is the *mondjo-ordeal*. This is a juridical action ordered by the chief, a real means of instruction in a criminal case. This custom calls to mind the judgment of God in the Middle Ages (ordeal is derived from "urtheil", judgment); it is practised by the majority of the Bantu tribes, varying from one tribe to another, but everywhere it has the same end in view, namely the discovery of the casters of spells by imposing an ordeal which is supposed to be fatal to such as be guilty.

This ordeal is called amongst the Ba-Ronga (as also from one end of the Thonga tribe to the other) *drinking the mondjo* (ku nwa mondjo). The mondjo is a plant of the Solaneae family which possesses intoxicating properties. With it a special magician prepares a beverage which must act as a means of revelation. It can be resorted to by any individual accused of witchcraft, or of any other crime. A woman accused of adultery, for instance, may say : "Let us go and drink the mondjo." The mondjo magician will give both the accused and the plaintiff a little of his drug, and the one who becomes intoxicated, or unconscious, after having taken the magic beverage will be convicted of guilt. But the mondjo ordeal can also be ordered by the chiefs, just the same as the rera nyiwa, not only as warning, but with the aim of revealing the wizards and in order to get rid of them.

This is how the ceremony is performed in Nondwane. When it has been decided, at the Capital, that all subjects shall undergo this ordeal, the chief sends word to the Shihahu folk to prepare the mondjo. These particular folk are a small clan inhabiting the left bank of the Nkomati, not far from the sea, northward of the district of Manyisa. The mondjo is cultivated by the medicine-men of Shihahu ; but they have by no means the monopoly of it, for my neighbour, Hamunde, who lived at Rikatla, a few steps from the station, had one of these plants growing in his village, where I myself saw it. But it is at Shihahu that

the recipe is known for the preparation of this magic philter. This is very complicated and intricate. It contains several strange ingredients, amongst others, a fact to be noted, *the fat of a leper long since deceased*, or a little of his powdered bones! To make sure of the efficacy of the drink, the Shihahu folk experiment upon a certain individual named Mudlayi. This man is considered the very chief, the "bull" of all the wizards of the country (nkunzi ya baloyi). He is more powerful than all the others in casting spells. If, therefore, the decoction produces in him the characteristic intoxicating effect, by which the spell casters are discovered, it is certain that the brewing has been a success. If, by any chance, Mudlayi should not have been intoxicated, word will be sent to the chief that the decoction has failed (yi hi hlulile), and another brew will be made, until the mondjo has attained the strength required. Then the people of Shihahu do not go directly to the chief, but, according to the rules of etiquette, to the counsellor who looks after the interests of their country. The other counsellors come to greet them, but the whole business is kept a great secret. Messengers are then sent to all the sub-chiefs, telling them to assemble, at a certain time, in a given place, bringing all their people with them. This general assembly takes place, on the borders of a lake. Every man and every woman must defile before the proprietors of the decoction and take a small mouthful of it, tepid, from a particular receptacle. Already at this stage of the proceedings some few, terror-stricken, make a confession : "Ndja loya!" — "I am a caster of spells", they cry. These persons are then collected together and placed on one side under a tree. The rest sit down in a line, in the fiery glare of the noon-day sun. There they are, then, all seated and exposed to the torrid heat of the sun's rays. They have received the following order : "Do not move! You must not scratch yourselves! Remain motionless!"

Mudlayi begins to dance in front of them. With widely opened eyes he glares in a peculiar manner at those who have sipped the mondjo. In his hair is fixed a large feather, which he waves up and down by moving his head. Everyone gazes at him intently.

Suddenly some one scratches his arm. Sounding his trumpet, *nte-nte-nte*, Mudlayi approaches the individual and places the feather in his hair over the forehead. The man tries to pull it out, but only clutches the air on one side or the other, in front of the feather. He is quite incapable of catching hold of it. A second individual begins to show the same symptoms of intoxication (popya) a little way down the line. Mudlayi continues his comings and goings to the sound of his trumpet. A third and a fourth are overcome in turn. They try to get up, clutching the grass to assist them to do so, but fall to the ground, or crawl feebly about. The others keep away from them. It seems that the mondjo dries up the saliva of all who drink it, but, in the case of the truly guilty, this effect is greatly accentuated; the jaws become locked. They try to speak but can only say *be-be-be-be* (they stammer). They are carried off, and all placed together under the tree where they are guarded by the chief's counsellors, who will not allow their friends or relations to come near them.

"*Selekan!*" — "Get up!" is the order given to all the others, the seated crowd who have not become intoxicated. Jumping to their feet, they must run at full tilt to the lake and bathe. Some get into difficulties on the way, they jostle each other, fall to the ground, and remain there, unable to regain their legs. Some even fall down in the water; all such are baloyi. The rest who have successfully undergone the trial of the mondjo, come back and are restored to freedom, after having received three pinches of a special powder; one of these is thrown over the right shoulder, another over the left, and the third is swallowed, in order to counteract the defilement consequent on having imbibed this drink of the wizards, which contained in solution.... the fat of a human being! As to the poor, unfortunate hypnotised folk, their business is settled. The magic potion has revealed their criminal character. They must be made to admit their evil deeds. The counsellors interrogate them. To restore the power of speech, a particular tisane, prepared from the herb called *thjeke*, is poured into the mouth; they are shampooed *(thlema)* on the cheeks and all over the body with its leaves.

The saliva returns. They gradually revive and then begin to speak : " Yes ! I devour men ! I ate so and so and I still have some of his flesh in store !... I hate so and so, and I would like to kill him, but I haven't done so yet... I bewitched the maize to hinder its growth." They are well reprimanded and told : " Cease your witchcraft and enchantments. Remove your spells from the cereals, let them grow properly, or we will kill you ! "

How can the effect of the mondjo be explained ? According to an old Native, the intoxication of the baloyi comes from the presence of these elements of human flesh contained in the solution. The noyi, who swallows them in drinking the philter, happens to do during the day that which he is accustomed to during the night : hence the loss of his senses. As a matter of fact the man who administers the drug, is clever enough to give a larger dose to those who are more or less supposed to be baloyi. Moreover there is a regular process of hypnotisation in Mudlayi's performance, and this is why some people fall into what seems to be a real cataleptic state.

3) The punishment of Witchcraft.

What is the punishment inflicted on the people convicted of the crime of witchcraft ? Let us remember that this is a crime, a homicide, an act doubly punishable by the Court Chief Shiluvane had regularly prohibited it by a decree in the following words : "I do not allow anybody to die in my country except on account of old age. So let the baloyi at once cease their enchantments, or I shall kill them all." In former times the crime of witchcraft was punished by death and the culprit was hanged at once. The last one punished in that way, amongst the Nkuna clan, was Mudebane (I. p. 418), and Mankhelu himself executed him. The wizards are impaled, or drowned according to the case. Flogging and banishment were also resorted to when the crime was not so heinous.

One of my informants (Fenis), who drank the mondjo at the

death of Zihlahla, chief of the Mpfumo district, about 1810, told me that the heaviest penalty imposed on the wizards on that occasion was a fine of one or two goats, or of one pound sterling. He attributed this leniency to the proximity of the Whites. The civilised Governments in Africa have certainly done their best to put down this method of smelling-out wizards, and their efforts have by no means been without result. Native chiefs are now content with fining the wizards £ 10 or 15, half of which remains in their pockets. I heard of one of them who pretended to be a Christian, but did not object to the substantial increase to his civil list, brought about by witchcraft suits.

IV. *Concluding Remarks on Witchcraft.*

Witchcraft is one of the greatest curses of Native Life. I attribute the enormous hold which this superstition has taken on the mind of the Bantu to three causes: 1) The *Animistic beliefs* explained on p. 344 which are at the root of the idea of the double existence of the baloyi. 2) *Cannibalism*, which has perhaps never existed as a general custom in South Africa, but has been practised sporadically in times of famine, and has left a feeling of disgust, and horror, amongst the later generations: this feeling is also shewn in the numerous Ogre tales. 3) The *terrible hatred* of which the Native mind is capable. If some people dare to accuse members of these tribes of such awful acts as those of killing and eating human flesh, it is because they know that a Native who hates would not shrink from anything to satisfy his desire of vengeance.

However we must remember that the witchcraft superstition has been universally spread amongst our own forefathers, and that there have been epidemics of it in the XIVth, XVth and even the XVIth centuries, hundreds of wizards having been tortured and burnt in most of the European countries, after having been tried before regular Courts. I have tried to establish a parallel between the ideas and practices of witchcraft in French Switzerland and those amongst the Thonga. The results of the comparison are very curious. I cannot give them all here, and must refer the reader to the Paris Revue "Foi et Vie", N° of October, 1910, where I published them. The most striking difference is this: amongst Thonga, we are still in the *predualistic age,* viz ,

the opposition between a good, moral Spirit (God) and bad, wicked spirits (demons, Satan) does not yet exist in Religion. So the power of God is not invoked to disclose the wizards, or to protect the innocent against their spells. But the same animistic conceptions evidently lay at the base of European, as well as of African witchcraft.

This superstition has a deadly effect on the Native life. It is for it a continual source of trouble, fear, quarrels, sorrow. Strange to say, it is on the increase in recent years. It ruins the villages. — "Formerly", say my informants, "you could see villages of ten, or twenty huts. Now the accusations of witchcraft have broken them in pieces. Everyone builds his own hut, separately, from fear of being bewitched, or because he is suspected of being a noyi." The evil affects the Native Christians communities themselves, (1) fosters hatred amongst them, and this animistic doctrine is much more difficult to overcome than heathenism itself, or ancestrolatry, which is very quickly and thoroughly abandoned by the converts.

I have already explained how I think Government can and must interfere in order to check this terrible superstition. (I. p. 418). But its eradication will only be possible under a twofold influence: the increase of the scientific spirit, which will victoriously destroy the absurdities of the animistic magical conceptions involved in these practices, and the Christian Religion, the Religion of Love and of Light, which banishes fear and hatred.

D. DIVINATION

Divinatory practices are extremely common amongst Thonga. Surrounded by so many evil influences, having very little or no scientific knowledge, possessing no notion of a God capable of lighting the path of their life, they try to obtain directions by consulting the various means of divination which they have invented, and it must be confessed that they have reached a high degree of proficiency in this domain. The anxiety to know the

(1) Christian Natives are so convinced that witchcraft is a reality that they interpret Matt. X. 28 by saying that "those which kill the body and who must not be feared" are the baloyi. Unhappily a Zulu translation of the Greek word *φαρμακοί* by baloyi, in Revelation XXII, v. 15, confirmed them in their idea that wizards certainly exist, as they are mentioned in the Bible!

future lies at the base both of presages and of the divinatory practices. Let us briefly consider first :

I. *The presages.*

They are of two kinds : some objects are ill-omened, they *singita* or *hlolela*, they foretell bad luck ; others are favourable and announce happiness and, more especially, plenty of meat ! Amongst the first we have already noticed : *the falling stars* (p. 287) ; *the snail* (p. 315) : should you meet with it on the road, you will soon hear that one of your relatives has died ; *the stem of cuscuta* (yendje-yendje) ; there are families, however, for which this is not of bad omen, but for other people it foretells misfortune ; *the mbonga bee* is of the same order ; the various kinds of *mistletoe* are also of bad omen. So also is the *puff-adder* (p. 317), the *likure* (p. 317), a greyish slender snake : if it blows upon you, or bites you, you will become thin and turn grey, as the animal itself ; the long-legged bird *shitshinya riendjo* foretells misfortune on the road (p. 128). See also the *buvumati* snake and the *nkangu bird*.

Other objects are of good omen ; the beetle *Eccopteptera* and the *Mutilla* (p. 314), and especially the beetle *Bombolosi*, belonging to the Curculionidae family, a curious insect which drops on the ground and counterfeits death, when touched or frightened : it is the symbol of riches. Natives hang it on a string at their door ; I have heard of others hanging it in their hair ; but in this case it is said to be placed there to eat lice !

All these superstitions are held more or less seriously. But, in order to know their fate and what they must do to avoid misfortune, Thonga have recourse to proper means of divination. Amongst these mantic practices some are simple and some more elaborate.

II. *Less important means of divination.*

1) Amongst these I may mention first the *pshapsha*, which corresponds to our "drawing lots" and is performed exactly in the same way by taking pieces of grass or sticks of different length, between the fingers, and drawing one of them: having first decided to act in such and such a way if the longer or the shorter grass be drawn. This is more or less a game and is employed mostly by children.

2) Another more serious means of divination is the *mondjo*, the enchanted philter, used as a regular means of procedure to obtain evidence in Court (I. p. 417), especially to discover wizards and adulterous women. It has been described at full length in the preceding paragraph.

3) A third one is the *divination by ecstasy* which is employed by the magician when "smelling out" the wizards. The old men pretend that, in former times, there were diviners who could guess anything when in that peculiar psychological state in which the subliminal faculties can develop wonderfully. Hendrick, a very old Native of Khosen, told me, speaking of one of these shinusa (this is the term by which these diviners are known): "He used to travel all through the land, practising his art in the villages. He was able to describe minutely a goat which he had never seen; or if somebody had buried something in a certain place to test him, he would go straight to the spot and say: 'Dig the earth here, you will find it'. Viguet also asserted that formerly there were real and trustworthy diviners in the Hlabi clans.

4 & 5) A young man of the Mabota clan described to me two other divinatory means employed by his father, the old Tumben (I. p. 270). One was called the *Small Mug* (shintjekwana). The diviner used to take a wooden mug in his left hand and hold it by the handle. He placed in it an antelope's or goat's horn and, with his right hand he beat his right leg, putting the question he wanted to elucidate. He said: "Is the matter

really as I say ? " If he had guessed rightly, the horn began to move to and fro ; if not, it remained quiet. Tumben also consulted the oracles by means of the *Small Calabash* (nhungubane). This calabash was fitted with some rags hanging from its neck. Moreover he passed a string round the calabash and held it hanging from the thumb of his left hand. He lifted that hand and with his right hand beat his right hip, putting questions to his magical calabash, calling it by the name he had given to it, viz., Nkoshi-wa-tihomu. When agreeing, the calabash answered by the rags, which moved in all directions. Then he said: " Keep quiet ! " and the calabash kept quiet. — " He astonished us greatly, our father ", added my informant ! " His divinatory power came from the fact that certain incisions had been made in his hand and a special medicine had been inoculated therein. He had been taught by a man called Shitakule. Those who have not been initiated cannot consult the calabash : the rags do not move for them, neither does the horn in the small mug ".

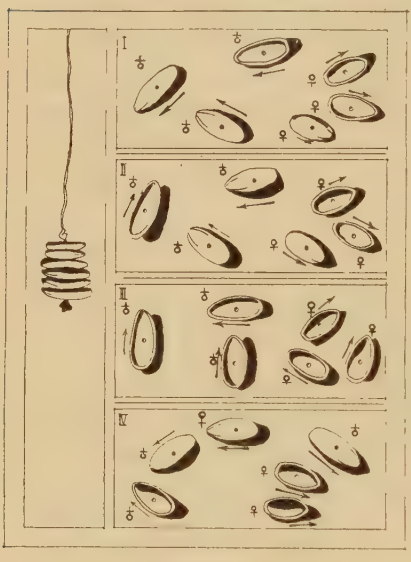
These are still primitive means of divination. We now come to the more elaborate, the famous divinatory bones. But before explaining this most curious and interesting subject, I will describe the *Hakati*, which proceeds from the same intuitions, but, being very much more simple, affords a useful introduction to the study of the bones.

III. *The Hakati.*

Hakati (yin-tin) is the name given to the stone of a fruit growing in the desert. This stone is oval-shaped and is cut down the middle so as to form two pointed cupules presenting a small notch at each extremity. These extremities are both called *nomu*, mouth, though there is certainly an anterior part, the one which is pointed, and a posterior part, the one which is blunt. Six of these cupules constitute a whole set. Three are male (♂), three female (♀), the former being distinguished merely by their larger size. In the set which I possess, some cupules have

been marked with brands of different kinds. It does not seem that these marks have any significance, except that they help the diviner to recognise such and such a shell at once. The six shells are pierced through in the middle so that they can be passed through a string and hung round the neck. (See on the left side of the adjoining plate).

The hakati is mostly employed in Hlengweland (Gaza), and seems to have been invented by the Ndjao tribe; the Ba-Ronga and Thonga of other clans, found it there during the hunting expeditions, and brought it back with them. It is used mostly by hunters to obtain directions and predictions as regards their undertakings. Some also employed them for their domestic affairs (psa muti), but they are hardly sufficient for this purpose.



The Hakati.

I have given an illustration of four cases which Spoon explained to me. The shells are thrown on a mat and two main things must be considered in the interpretation : the *direction* towards which they look and the *side* on which they fall : they may be on their back, in the negative position, showing the concavity of the shell, or on their "legs" in the positive position, showing the convexity of the shell.

N° 1. Two female shells on their backs looking to the right : the women have remained sleeping in the village. One of them (♂ shell on her legs) is working. The male shell, on the top is the hunter who starts in the early morning, pursues the elephant (the ♂ shell to the right) with his gun (the ♂ shell at the bottom)... The hunter is on

his back : he has missed the elephant which runs away, being on his legs ! Bad prognostic !

N° 2. Same scene : Women sleeping at home ; early morning. But here the hunter is on his legs and the elephant on his back : the beast will be killed ! Favourable prognostic !

N° 3. Case of disease. Everybody on their backs, males and females ! Very bad case ! No hope ! They hardly breathe !

N° 4. Another case of disease. On the left, three shells ; the shell in the middle is the patient ; that at the bottom, in the negative position, is his grief, his mouth wide open, moaning ; that on the top is a female one, a woman who caused his disease, either by bewitching him, or because he had unlawful connection with her. On the right three other shells : that at the top, the male one, is a friend going out of the village to fetch a remedy ; the two others, female, are two women opening their mouth, not to lament, but to laugh ! They laugh at that man who was silly enough to expose himself to such a disgrace !

Those who practice the hakati art must also be initiated. They have to bury their shells in the earth on the road, and, when a person passes on the path they unearth one shell, a male, one if the passer-by be a man, a female one if it be a woman, (See later on).

IV. *The Divinatory bones (Bula).*

The hakati shells are considered as a more or less childish custom. The divinatory bones, on the contrary, form an admirable system of divination and play a considerable part in the life of the tribe. They are called *nhlolo* (yin-tin), this is the little name ; the great one is *bula*, evidently the same word as *ku bula*, to speak, i. e. the *Word* with a capital letter, the Revelation ! I remember the old Maselesele, a Nkuna diviner, telling me : " You Christians, believe in your Bible. Our Bible is much better than yours ! It is the divinatory bones ! "

I was initiated into the knowledge of this wonderful art by many masters. The first one was *Spoon* ; he was only a beginner, and his set of bones was not complete ; but he understood

the rules perfectly well and all that he told me was confirmed by a subsequent study. The second was *Maselesele*, the old Nkuna just referred to, a blind man who knew his bones by the mere touch, and had for them a real veneration. Unhappily for the poor Nkuna, his hut was burnt during the Sikororo war (I. p. 484) and the precious basket containing his bones was destroyed. — " Why did they not warn you of the fate they were about to undergo ? ", I asked Maselesele one day. " They might have ordered you to save them if they knew everything ! " He could find no answer to this remark, but his faith was absolutely unshakable. Such was also the case of *Mankhelu* who had practised the art all his life, and was attached to his divinatory bones by all the fibres of his heart. His set was the most complete I ever saw, containing as many as 64 objects. He even had two sets, one contained in a leathern basket, the other in a kind of net with small meshes ; the first he called the Father and the second the Son. The Father always remained at home, whilst he took the Son with him on his travels. I spent many hours with him, trying to fully understand his teaching and he took great trouble to initiate me, concealing nothing from me, wondering sometimes at his own willingness and saying : " This thing I would not have told my own son. " So, I had the opportunity of reaching the depths of the Bantu mind, that mind which has perhaps invented nothing more elaborate and more typical than this divinatory system. Of course no sensible person would for a moment believe in the objective value of these practices. *Astragalomancy* has no more real worth than Cheiromancy, Necromancy and all the other " mancies ". But I am obliged to confess that the Thonga system is far more clever than any other which I have met with, and that it admirably answers to the wants of the Natives, as it comprehends all the elements of their life, photographs them, so to speak, in such a way that indications and directions can be obtained for all possible cases.

I have explained in detail Spoon's art in " Les Ba-Ronga ". I will here confine myself to Mankhelu's revelations which were

more complete, as the old man was one of the masters of the diviners' profession as well as of that of the medicine-men.

1) The objects composing the set of divinatory bones.

They can be divided in two kinds : the *bones* properly speaking, most of which are *astragalus bones*, and the various objects which are *not bones*. I shall enumerate them now, always giving the Native name of the object, as these names are technical and form quite a special vocabulary which seems to bear an archaic character.

a) Amongst the bones some belong to *domestic animals*, goats, and sheep, and they consequently epresent the *people dwelling in the village* :

Five astragalus of *he-goats* : 1) *Mbulwa*, astragalus of an old castrated he-goat, the old man. 2) *Mbulwana* (diminutive of mbulwa), a he-goat not so old : men of ripe age. 3) *Shivimbiri*, a non-castrated he-goat : men in their prime. 4) *Shivimbidjana* (diminutive of the preceding), a non-castrated younger he-goat: young men of sixteen to twenty. 5) *Morisana wa timbuti shi-anwa-mafi*, the astragalus of a kid which still suckles : litt e boys, goatherds.

Six astragalus of she-goats : 1) *Gosha nkata wa mbulwa*, the old woman no longer capable of childbearing (1). 2) *Mihlangwana ya bukati, shinyuki sha timbuti*, a ripe woman still in the child bear-

(1) This, as most of the bones, has a long story. When Mankhelu was made prisoner by the old Boer Government for having strangled a pretended wizard (I. p. 418), and condemned to death, a diviner consulted the bones for him and advised him to draw the image of a Native village on the earth and to pray every day to his ancestor-gods on his mother's side, asserting that they would deliver him and that, when he returned home, he should sacrifice a goat to them. He added : " If people offer you a cow on the road, refuse ". Mankhelu was released indeed owing to petitions made in his favour, and on his way home, everybody was welcoming him. In a village, people wanted to give him a cow : he refused. When he reached his kraal one of the wives of his maternal uncle came with twenty jars of beer, five baskets of mealies and three goats. He sacrificed one of these, and the astragalus became the *gosha* of his set... He cannot see it without a thrill of the heart !

ing age, still smearing her body with ochre. 3) *Ntibulana* (from tibula, to bring forth a child for the first time) young married women, having only one child. 4) *Nhombela*, she-goat before parturition : girls practising the *gangisa* (I. p. 96), running about during the night but not yet married. 5) *Nhombedjana* and *nhombedjana yo-añwa-mafi*, little goat and suckling goat : girls still unaware of sexual matters, or babies at the breast.

The goats, here as every where else, mean the subjects. The *sheep* mean the chiefs. There are five astragalus of sheep : 1) *Hamba. nuna wa noni*, a castrated ram, the chief and the old men of the royal family ; 2) *shikwela sha timpfu* or *khuna ra timpfu*, a non-castrated ram : the sons of the royal family, the εὐγενεῖς ! (bana ba-ku-tsalwa). 3) Another *shikwela*, astragalus of the ram sacrified during the Sikororo war, the one whose psanyi was used for the sprinkling of the Nkuna army ; it designates the enemy, and is watched with special attention when casting the bones in connection with military matters. 4) *Noni wa timpfu*, an old sheep, the widow of the chief. 5) *Nhombela ya timpfu*, a young sheep, the girls of the royal family. As regards the wife of the chief, she is represented by the astragalus of the female mhala antelope.

In one of his sets of bones Mankhelu also had two objects taken *from an ox*. One was an oval shaped smooth bone, two inches long, the other one of the hoofs which was decorated on one of its three faces with triangular marks (See plate). Both represent the *Nkuna* tribe, whose totem is the buffalo. (Comp. I. p. 337). But this is a custom borrowed from the Suto-Pedi. I never saw bones corresponding to totems in the Thonga divination; the idea of totem is altogether absent from the minds of the Thonga when not influenced by their Pedi neighbours.

After the domestic animals, there are a number of astragalus, or other bones, taken from *wild animals*.

First from *antelopes:* the male *mhala*, *tsombe ra mhala*, means the chief, and the female mhala, his wife; the male mhunti, *tsombe ra mhunti*, *mhunti ya matlhari*, the duyker of the weapons, means fighting men, and the female mhunti, called *mbiri*, means women of loose character : *mbiri ya ku tola ñwashifamba ni mafura eku rimen.*

the woman who smears herself with grease and ochre, even when she goes to her field (thus trying to attract the attention of men). The *nhlangu* (reed buck), wandering about during the night, means wizards, as these cast their spells nightly. Mankhelu had only the astragalus of the female in his set. The

Objects particularly remarkable in Mankhelu's set of divinatory bones

1. Mbalala antelope ♂ +. 2. Ram —. 3. Mhala antelope ♂ ×. 4. Reed buck ♀ :. 5. Phalanx of a Lion +. 6. Astragalus found in the dejecta of a hyena. Ancestor-god. 7. Malumbi +. 8. Ant-bear +. 9 Hyena +. 10. Leopard +. 11. Baboon +. 12. Kanye stone +. 13. Kanye : part of twig +. 14. Ox. 15. Ox hoof.

mbalala antelope dwells in the forest; it does not like to come out in the plains; so its astragalus designates the chief who

rests in his hut and does not expose himself to the toil and the heat.

The astragalus of the *ngolube ya ku dya marambo, yi tjela mitshi yi ralarala, yi languta hi matlhelo*, the wild boar which eats the bones, which digs holes, which looks on all sides, is the medicine-man who searches for roots to prepare his drugs. The female wild pig is the medicine man's wife.

Three astragalus of a very different form come from *baboons, nuna wa mfene*, the male baboon, *nsati wa mfene*, the female baboon, *nhombela ya mfene*, the young baboon They symbolise the *village*. because baboons never move. "You never see the ruins of their habitations; though men may build in their neighbourhood, these apes do not leave for ever, you will see them coming again next spring."

The following bones are asexual. There is only one of each kind in the set and it is not said whether it is male or female: the phalanx of a *lion* (ndjao), either male or female, either taken from the fore leg or from the hind leg, either on the left or on the right side. The lion is the chief of wild animals, so its phalanx represents the chief of the tribe, par excellence. It also designates White people, who are considered as rich as kings! The astragalus of the *panther, yingwe, shidya mafura*, the beast which eats fat and eats no grass, is also alone of its kind, the male only being taken; it represents those who can chose their food, the rich, not the miserable, "the chiefs and you, White people", says Mankhelu! The *hyena, mhisi*, means the counsellors, the sycophants, the parasites; they resemble the hyena which follows the lion and the panther to eat the remains of their feasts, breaking the bones of a prey which it was not strong enough to kill! But the astragalus of the hyena also represents the wizards, because they eat the meat of people whom they steal, the ancestor-gods, because it keeps hidden in holes during the day, as the psikwembu in their graves, the chief himself, in so much as the chief also "eats" his subjects and you cannot follow him and recover your property any more than you can from a hyena!

The astragalus of the *ant-bear* (mhandjela), which digs the holes

in which porcupines live, has also many significations : the ancestor-gods, because they dwell in the earth and never come out in the day-time; the power of death, because it digs the grave; the chief himself, because ant-bears eat earth, and the chief also puts it to his mouth when sacrificing; he alone has the right to do so, when he says *tsu*. because the earth is his; it already belonged to his ancestors and he calls to them through it (p. 378). Spoon used one of the claws of the ant-bear, instead of its astragalus

A very curious bone is the one called *Shikwembu*, ancestor-god. It is an astragalus of mhala which has been found in the stools of a hyena: a most uncommon discovery and one which Mankhelu made when going to Swaziland. The bone is worn down : it has evidently been bitten by sharp teeth. I have explained (p. 350) how fittingly this bone was chosen to represent the spirits of the departed. They have also been swallowed by the earth, as the astragalus by the hyena, but they come again to light and life in a new and divine existence!

The last astragalus of the set is the *malumbi*, the astragalus of the *shipene* or *mangulwe* antelope; it is also asexual : *shirombe sha matiko. malumbyana wa tintibo, ntsinyarendjo !* the miserable of the lands, the little antelope with white spots, the one which stops travellers (p. 325) ! It plays a special part in the divinatory system, representing everything which is violent (leba) : the chief, the enemy and especially the mysterious power of Heaven. This is why it is watched with great attention by those casting bones in regard to the rain. When it falls in the "mild" position, it means that "the eye of Heaven is open, the knot is untied, the mouth of Heaven is open, rain will fall !" Then Mankhelu will present the offering (mhamba) for the rain : first the four leaves, then, if this is not sufficient, and if the chief requires it, the sacrifice of the black ram (p. 295, 300).

I include in the category of bones the pieces of *Tortoise shell*, *mfutju*, four of which are found in Mankhelu's basket : *mbulwa wa mfutju*, the adult male tortoise, *nsati, ntibula ya mfutju*, the young tortoise. According to the way they fall, these objects

designate the peace or the misfortune of the village, prosperity or starvation. (1)

b) The second category comprises the objects which are not bones or parts of the body of an animal. The most conspicuous are the *sea-shells* (djuma, dji-ma) belonging to two different genera : the *Oliva* shells, representing the attributes of the males, assagais, virile courage, etc., the *Cypraea* shells, corresponding to the attributes of the females, baskets, pots, pregnancy, births, oxen for lobola, etc.

Besides there are two *kanye stones* of an abnormal form, one found by a woman, it is the *female nkanye*, the other by a man, it is the *male nkanye*. These abnormal stones are very rare They represent the vegetal world, especially the *medicines, the drugs*. They are supplemented by a little piece of nkanye twig, *nhombela ya nkanye*, the girl of nkanye, which was cut by a girl of Mankhelu's village on a certain day when he went to his " bakokwana " (to the relatives of his mother) to make a sacrifice. Being their uterine nephew, he had special rights and took the opportunity of enriching his divinatory set with their assistance.

Two *stones* are also in the basket : the first is *ribye ra ngwenya* or *shimidjya sha ngwenya*, a stone found in the stomach of a crocodile ; these stones are generally of a dark colour and frequently represent mourning, defilement (khumo, nsila); the second one is *ribye ra daviman*, the stone of diamond, not a real diamond unhappily, but a stone with striking design, found on the road, or in distant lands, by a traveller. It means luck, money, riches brought from foreign countries, gold which is extracted from the soil, in the same way as was this stone. I have shewn on the adjoining plate the most curious and rarest of the contents of Mankhelu's basket. In that of Maselesele there were also two pieces of white china, which represented

(1) One day travelling through a heavy rain, Mankhelu found a tortoise. He borrowed one of his divinatory bones from it. Soon afterwards he discovered an animal (I did not catch what it was) which had just died and he ate it. Some time later he was offered a big he-goat in a village. So when the tortoise falls together with the astragalus of that animal, it is a sign that plenty of meat will be available !

the Whites; another Nkuna diviner had adopted the shuttle of a sewing-machine for the same purpose. But these are newcomers in the basket, and are not met with in the old sets.

Comparing the explanations of the old Nkuna Mankhelu, who had been initiated long ago and was an experienced diviner, with those of Spoon who belonged to the Coast clans and was still a beginner in this art, I found a remarkable uniformity. However, there are some differences which can be explained by the wonderful imagination of the diviners. For instance, the wild pig indicated for Spoon the ancestor-gods, because they dwell in the sacred woods and dig the earth. and also old relatives who are on the eve of becoming gods; the duyker meant the wizard because it also walks during the night, and the traveller because it rarely rests.

Though the bones have a determinate and essential meaning, they can also designate other objects if it is possible to establish a similarity between the animal and these objects, and we know how clever the Bantu mind is at discovering such relations between men and animals.

2) The rules of interpretation.

Mankhelu is ready to consult his bones, either in his own village, if he wants a guidance for himself, or in the hut of one of his customers who may have called him for a consultation. He puts aside the supernumerary objects : each animal is represented by two astragalus, as a rule, so he first removes any third or fourth, if they happen to be in his basket. He holds them firmly between his two hands, chews a little piece of an odoriferous root (the bulb of Liliacea called *shirungulu*), spits on them in order "to awaken them", or "to make them see" (hanyanyisa), and throws them on a mat saying: "Mamoo!" Should he operate in another village for other people, in the case of disease, for instance, the inmates are present, sitting near the mat on which the bones are thrown. It may be that the consulter himself will throw the bones: in any

case all answer: "Hizwaa! si ya vuma" — "Yes, we are agreed!" All of them intently look at the bones scattered in all directions to learn what has been revealed by the Word. Possibly there will be a correspondence between the way the bones fall and the case for which the consultation is made. For instance, if it is on account of a sick person, the astragalus representing that person has fallen in the negative position. Then

Consulting the bones. *Phot. A. Borel.*

the "Word" has spoken. If there is no correspondence whatever, the bones are thrown again, once, twice, or ten times! If they "refuse to speak" (yala) in the hut, the diviner will perhaps move to the square, or to the bush, or behind the hut, until a clear answer is given.

Suppose the bones have consented to speak: three or four things will be specially examined: the *side* on which the bones have fallen, the *direction* towards which they look, their *disposition* or the position they have taken in regard to each other, and

the *relation* of the male and the female bones with each other, viz., are all the male or all the female bones on the same side? Each object can fall on two sides, as all of them present a *convex* and a *concave* side. If they fall, showing the convex side (bukhatsha position), they are said *to be full* (ku tala), or *to stand on their legs* and to *march forward* (ku famba); this is the *positive side*, which

Phot. H. A. Junod.

Mankhelu imitating the « ntjumba » position.

I mark +; if they fall showing their concave side (lwandla position) they are *empty* (ku pshya, image of a lake which has dried up), or lie *on their back:* this is the *negative position* which I mark by —. In the first case, the person or principal represented by the bones is happy (tjaka), in peace (rula), active, marching, powerful; in the second he is tired (karala), ashamed (tingana), powerless, dying (fa). Astragalus of goats, and sheep, on their convex side, show that the inhabitants of the village, or the chief,

are in good health and good spirits, working, succeeding ; on their concave side, they show that those persons are lying ill or dying. On the other hand, the astragalus of the ant-bear in the positive position, indicates that the digger digs a grave, that ancestor-gods are awake and probably ready to punish, etc. So it would not be correct to call the convex side the favourable,

Phot. H. A. Junod.

Mankhelu imitating the « minkono » position.

and the concave side the unfavourable one. The first is the *active* position, the second the *passive* one. — Most of the astragalus can fall not only on these two principal sides, but also on the right or on the left side. The right side is called *ntjumba*, and is somewhat convex. Mankhelu explained to me its meaning by mimicking the position himself (See the adjoining plate). He is sitting, his shield protecting him; but *his chest full*, ready to spit (like a cat), and his assagay is lifted ready to be thrown;

this is the position of hostility, of anger. The left side is called *dzwari*, or *minkono*, viz., the elbows; it is somewhat concave. It is the position of a man half leaning on his elbows, *his chest empty*, enjoying life and not threatening others, the assagay being turned towards the soil (See the next plate). These two positions which I would represent by ×, the sign of multiplication for *ntjumba*, and : , the sign of division for *minkono*, are rarely met with. Spoon ignored them. They belong to a more elaborate art. In fact the two first positions are by far the most common. Let us see what is the meaning of some of the divinatory objects in those different positions:

Baboon +, the village is firm; no ruin! Baboon —, the village is destroyed; disease or death; that which you eat does not remain inside: dysentery.

Ancestor-god +, the gods are happy and thankful. Ancestor-god —, they sleep; there is nothing to fear. ×, they are angry they speak in a low voice; : , they speak mildly.

Kanye +, the drugs have their eyes open (the two kernels inside the nkanye stone have been removed, and it looks as if it had two eyes which are visible in the positive position and hidden in the negative); the drugs help, cure. Kanye —, the eyes of the drugs are closed; the medicine-man will not succeed.

Crocodile stone +, the country is in peace, the village is happy, no miscarriage. Crocodile stone —, the crocodile is hidden in the water, it waits for you and will kill you: starvation, death, defilement.

Tortoise-shells +, the village is smeared with ochre; every body perspires agreeably, walking slowly as tortoises do when they come out, enjoy the rain, eat grass. People drink beer. They eat plenty. Tortoise-shell —, misfortune in the village; everything looks black (the concave side of the tortoise-shell is rough and more or less black). Nothing is cared for on the square; the grass grows there; disorder, death, starvation. The tortoises are hidden in their holes.

Female sea-shells +, the rivers are full; pregnancy is normal; the riches which come by the sea on the steamers are well protected. Female sea-shells —, the rivers are empty; birth is

imminent, either favourable or not; there has been a wreck at sea : you will find riches on the shore!

Male sea-shells +, the assagais are in good condition ; men succeed in their undertakings. Male sea-shells —, assagais are broken; the army will be defeated.

Sea-shells in the negative position, showing their opening, also mean a mouth open to laugh or to cry: if all are in this position, it means lamentations, because when all the people open their mouths, it is always to lament; when two or three only show their teeth, it means laughter, as people never laugh all together, but only a few at a time (?!)

If the side on which the bones have fallen is to be considered before all else in the interpretation, the *direction* towards which they look is also very important, as it reveals the intentions and the movements of all the personages represented; their *disposition* shows the relation between those persons; moreover if all, or most, of the astragalus of the same sex fall in the same position, this is a sign to be particularly noted for the following reason: if a woman is sick and you want to receive directions as to what to do for her, you cast the bones: she-goat falls on the negative side; this proves that the Word speaks; but if all the other feminine astragalus show their concave side also then no doubt remains; the Word really speaks : a precious confirmation is given!

3) Some cases of astragalomancy.

My informants have explained to me a certain number of cases which will illustrate the system of astragalomancy better than anything else. I have published illustrations of seven of them in an article in the Bulletin IX of the Society of Geography of Neuchâtel. They were given to me by Spoon. I will here republish one of them, the case of the sick mother, and two new ones, much more complicated, which I owe to Mankhelu.

These three cases will be sufficient to illustrate the divinatory system. Let me give, as a preliminary, the two following instances :

Prediction of rain : Ram × and Mhala ×, the chief is full of confidence ; the He-goats, the headmen are glad and thankful ; Mbalala +, the chief is happy ; it will be wet in the forest ! Tortoises —, there is black everywhere ; the soil is dark on account of the rain. Olivae +, all the huts are closed because nobody dares to go out lest he will be soaked ! Baboons +, the village will eat plenty. If Baboon were —, the rain would be accompanied with bad winds which would break the mealies and bring starvation.

The place where the timbhorola (the dirt falling from the body of a convalescent during the hondlola rite, p. 428) *must be thrown*. Here the diviner proceeds by questions, in order to obtain the directions required. He asks : " In the river ? " and throws the bones ; if the astragalus of the patient falls in the + position, Male Tortoise also, the female astragalus are on their elbows, playing, smiling ; if the Lion is — (the bad bloods have been overcome) ; if Hyena is — (the disease which kills is vanquished), the Ant-bear is — (the gods sleep), the female Tortoises are +, meaning that women will soon be able to smear their bodies with ochre, — then the answer is : yes. If this is not the case, he asks : " Into an ants'nest ? " and he again throws the bones, until the answer is positive.

The chiefs always consult the bones to know if the time has come *to sow the seeds* of pumpkins and millet. If all the Sea-Shells fall showing their mouths (yahlama), if the astragalus of the ram and ewe are in the + position, then you may sow.

See, p. 440, how the bones are consulted in order to obtain directions *in the rites of exorcism*, and, p. 479, how they help to *disclose the wizards*.

a) *The case of the sick mother.*

See in the centre *She-goat* —; the mother is sick, on her back ! Above *Antelope* + and under the red *Oliva* +, Malumbi, are looking towards her : these are the malignant influences which have put her in this state. *Cypraea* — wide-open, on her left, shews that she suffers from dysentery ! At the extreme left see *Weaned-Kid* + and *Young Goat* + on their legs, walking ; they are going towards *He-goat*, the father, who is also +, not quite discouraged, and pointing toward the *kanye*, the medicine by which he hopes to help his wife. By so

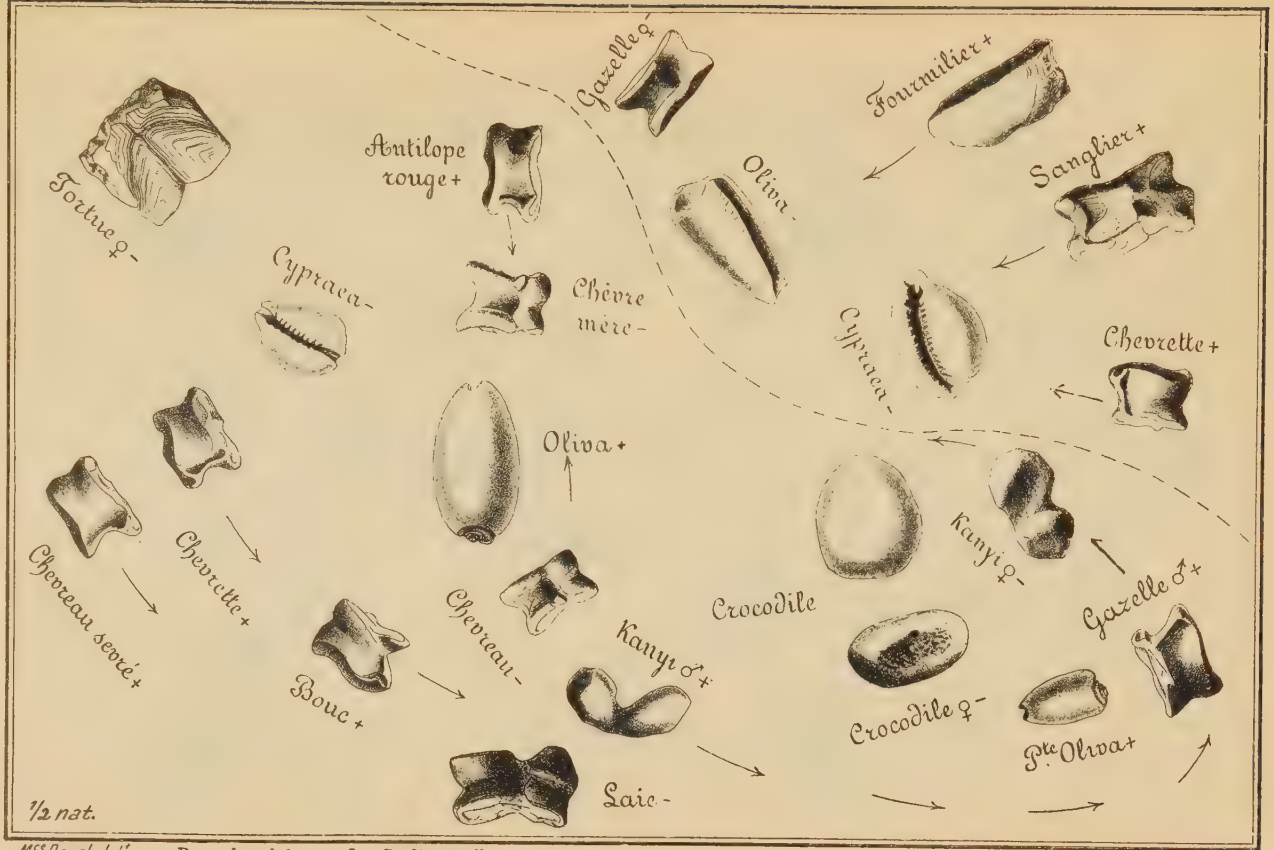
doing he keeps in check *Wild sow*, the ancestor-god, who is thus prevented from adding his hostile influence to those already active. Near him is *Kid* —, a young boy on his back, quite in despair, remaining near his mother. The father, having spoken with his children, starts for the bush and he follows the three arrows shewn at the bottom of the plate. Look, on the right, *Gazelle*, Duyker +; it is he again who returns from his walk as a traveller (the duyker, being always on his legs, often represents travellers). He holds the drug he has dug up *(Kanye —)*. But this kanye stone is on the bad side; it has been difficult to find the roots which were penetrating into the soil, as do the two protuberances of the stone! Moreover two *Crocodiles'stones* speak of death: the little *Oliva* + looks at the father in a hostile way. The bones of the upper part, on the right, contain no encouragement whatever: *Wild pig* + is an old relative coming to pay a visit to the sick woman; he is accompanied by a girl, *Young She-Goat*, under him, who also goes to the village with lamentations shown by the open *Cypraea* in front of her; on the top, *Ant-bear* (fourmilier) comes to dig the grave! Near him *Gazelle* — is on her back, without strength, whilst *Tortoise* —, at the left corner, lies also on her back: no agreeable perspiration, no peace, no happiness.

The bones have given a triple revelation: they have depicted the actual position, shown its cause, and indicated its course and the remedy: the disease is serious, but there is ground for hope if the father finds the right drug. Should the astragalus of the He-goat have been on its back and that of the Wildsow on its legs, directed against the patient, the case would be hopeless.

b) *The battle of Moudi.*

On the 6th of November, 1900, when the hostile army of Sikororo was signalled (I. p. 485), Mankhelu, seized with a terrible dread, consulted his bones. The Word spoke with such precision that one would be tempted to believe in an arrangement made post eventum. But Mankhelu asserts that many witnesses were present and testify to the prophecy of the victory which occurred the following day.

The bones fall in two lots, a first lot, those on the two upper thirds of the plate, on the side of the diviner, representing consequently his own army: complete victory! A second lot, in the lower third of the plate, representing the enemies: absolute rout! I have separated these



Mlle Borel. del' Reproduced from " Les Ba Ronga ". Attinger sc.

The case of the sick mother.

two parts with dots. Look at the inferior part first. Three Rams on their backs: the chiefs killed; the Ram is Rios, the acting chief of the Sikororo clan, the great enemy. Yesterday a ram was sacrificed to ask the gods to give victory. Its astragalus was taken and added to the other bones, with the intention of representing Rios: here he is, dead on the battle-field! Quite near, Wild pig and Kanye are also on their backs: their medicine-man has been unable to protect them. Baboon is —, the village of Sikororo is destroyed! Tortoises —, no peace in that village, they are black! No resplendent ochre, but darkness and misfortune for them! Female mhala ×, the women have their chests full of grief; they cry. See all the female astragalus on their backs, or on their sides, in dreadful misfortune. Oliva —, the weapons broken, powerless. Two Cyprea +, no laughter, faces dark! Hyena —. Titus, a Pedi Christian who acted as counsellor to the chief, the sycophant of Rios, has been killed. Look, on the left corner, at the bottom, Ram +. It is the old Sikororo, the chief who dwelt in the mountains and had not given his consent to the treacherous attack. He is alone, unaware of what has been done by Rios, the chief regent. The Nkuna will not interfere with the good old man.

On the Nkuna side, Lion and Malumbi are in the foreground: the one + the other ×, viz. full of courage: they represent the superior powers: you, Ba-Moneri the missionaries), who have helped us in that terrible hour! Leopard +, the sons of the chief are also running wildly towards the enemy. Ox +, the totem of the Nkuna clan is in good order: he is safe. Shikwembu sleeps; the ancestor-gods are not anxious about us; they rest peacefully. Wild pig +, the medicine man who sprinkled the army is happy; all his drugs (kanye +) are acting, having their eyes open. Look behind Malumbi: all the troops of warriors, Mhunti, Mhala, all in the ntjumba position, in high spirits, and their arms (Oliva |) all firm, victorious. The guns will not miss fire. Behind them, the kids and young goats, little boys and girls, are playing, quietly leaning on their elbows (minkono position). The chief (Mbabala +) who remained at home is happy, as is also the old He-goat, his uncles who did not take part in the battle. Ant-bear +, the ancestor-god of the village is also quiet; the two Tortoises + warm themselves in the rays of the sun; the women still smear their bodies with fat and ochre!

The battle of the 6th of November, 1900, was a great event for the Nkuna tribe. For me it was a wonderful opportunity of witnessing

(One third of the natural size).

The battle of Moudi

some of the most curious customs of the tribe. I owe to it this consultation, the narrative of Mankhelu's mhamba (p. 382) and the knowledge of many military rites (I. p. 451).

c) Prophecy of a Migration.

In the day of renewing his drugs, which was a feast for his whole village (p. 415), Mankhelu threw his bones and they gave marvellous promises : a throng of distinguished visitors was going to come and make their submission to him, to increase his power ; princes, rich people laden with wealth ! As Mankhelu was residing on the Mission farm, he said to me one day : " Be happy, my missionary, you will have new tenants who will increase the value of your farm ! They prepare their loads now... My god, Shiluvane, has revealed that to me. They will come before the tilling season begins. If they do not come I will give you an ox ! " Some months later, no one having appeared on the horizon, I inquired from my old friend where was my ox. With a good-natured laugh he said : " Look ! I will show you how the bones have told me lies ", and he placed his sixty-two bones on the mat as they had fallen on that day :

There are the two halves again, separated by the dotted line ; in the lower part the migrating clan coming, in the upper, Mankhelu's village welcoming it : Two Baboons —, the village is ruined, they leave it ; their chiefs are Lion, who is +, in good health, and Ram :, laughing, smiling, playing. Malumbi is <; his chest is full, because he runs away ; he is a powerful man, but he is out of breath. See near Ram his daughter Duyker ♀ on her back : he offers her in marriage. She will even give us a child (young male Duyker near her !) The child will be a boy, as he is surrounded by Tortoise ♂ and the male shell Oliva. These chiefs might have been dispossessed of their own country : this is shown by the Ram of Mapsakomo ; this astragalus was taken after a sacrifice made at the death of Mapsakomo, the rival of Muhlaba, who died from anger when his right to the chieftainship of the Nkuna clan was forefeited (I. p. 385). Young He-goat, in front of him, also proves the foreign origin of the visitors : it is an astragalus which Mankhelu obtained in the Mpahlela district, South of the Oliphant. Young goat, playing, shows the same thing, its astragalus came from Swaziland. Look, in front of her, another Young goat — ; it is a girl who is offered us in mar-

(One third of natural size).

Prophecy of a Migration.

riage, perhaps a second one, perhaps the same as Duyker ♀; at any rate the prediction is confirmed. This Young goat is called that of *ringela bovumba*, because its astragalus has been taken from the animal sacrificed in the rite of removing the malediction of bovumba (I. p. 191). It might show that the misfortune of these noble strangers will also be removed when they come and dwell with us! Hyena is in the + position: they are cunning people; nobody will dare to run after them! They keep firm hold of what they possess or have stolen! Leopard +; they are rich people, living on fat and meat. Look at the two Cypraea +, the sea! the wealth brought into the country by the steamers and which they carry with them! One could think they were White people! Wild pig +, they have their medicine-man and their drugs (kanye +); their children (young He-goat : and Duyker ♂ : play and dance! Their women (Mhala + Ewe. +) are covered with ochre as shown by Tortoise +. Their gods, Shikwembu :, and Antbear +, are with them and have "given them the road"; they are pointing in the same direction. "Look at Ewe, the old woman, the widow of the chiefs! What has she hanging round her neck? — Oliva, a crocodile-tooth? an amulet well smeared with protective drugs?" Such is the procession of the new-comers.

In the upper half, see the village of Mankhelu welcoming them: the young children and the women run in front (Duyker ♀ +, Young Duyker +, Young Goats + and :, Young Ewe +, Ntibula +); they are curious, they will see who are the visitors. Behind them come the old ones: Mbabala ♀ +, the wife of the chief; the chief himself, Muhlaba, Mbabala ♂ is on his elbows: quiet and smiling, in no way fearing this peaceful invasion, whilst his mother, Mother-Goat, also comes dancing. Baboon +, does it not show that the village is in security? Mankhelu himself is represented by three bones: Ram + and two He-goats +. He comes with dignity to meet the arrivals. Behind, in the village itself (on the top of the plate), boys (kids) play under the shade of the trees (kanye); two women kill each other's lice! i. e. Reedbuck and Cypraea, the female sea-shell! etc. One of the Tortoises is —, showing its black side. But this is not a sign of disease or defilement; it is the village cleaned, the black soil visible everywhere, because it has been well swept and the huts also have been smeared afresh. The black colour also means the bush which has been burnt; it prophesies the time when these strangers will come: when the bush-fire has reduced all the grass to ashes, in September or October, at the end of the winter. The Tortoise in

front of He-Goat is +; it is the face of Mankhelu, radiant with joy. "Mahlwen ka mbulwa ku nyuka!" — "on the face of the old man there is sweet perspiration." His drugs are all right (kanye +, means both drugs and shade). Crocodile is —, the rivers are low; this confirms the forecast of the time of the arrival. The Kimberley stone is +: the earth is solid, firm. Oliva +, the sky is clear, we are happy! When we rise in the morning we look towards the East! etc."

— "Wonderful!" said I to Mankhelu. "Only they did not come!" — "Never mind," he answered. — "Then the bones have deceived you!" — "Not at all! If it is not this year, it will be next year! Moreover, we diviners do not fear to be told that our bones lie. When, later on, our prophecies are fulfilled, then people wonder! They are convinced. And after all, if the Word lies, it is not my fault"! — "How is that?" — "We do not put our ideas into them (a hi ti rumeteli); we merely interpret them; it is they who speak!" — "Then they have a power in themselves?" — "No! the power is in the chest of the diviner." Such was the conversation by which the demonstration was closed. I shall return to it presently.

4) The initiation of the diviners.

The astragalomancy is not an esoteric art; every one in the tribe knows the bones, and their signification, and all the men attend the consultations and help in the interpretation. However, every one is not a diviner and an initiation is necessary to become a fully qualified practitioner. If a young man feels that he has the necessary qualities of cleverness and shrewdness to practise the art, he begins by collecting the astragalus one after the other. This is a long job. Spoon told me that, having once been annoyed by a forecast made by a diviner, he thought: "I might as well consult the bones myself!" So he picked up the astragalus of a goat in a hut. He obtained others when hunting; on the road to Johannesburg he saw a curious stone which became the stone of luck in his set. When he had ten astragalus, he began to throw them for his comrades, giving them advices in their love affairs! Then he consulted his bones

before going to hunt and noticed that, when the astragalus of the duyker fell in the negative position, he killed game. But he was still an apprentice; he had not the right to receive money, but only bracelets which hung on the string of his basket. (1) When the apprentice has earned enough of these bracelets, he goes to an old practitioner, gives them to him as a fee, and asks to be initiated, so as to become a master himself. Shishakane, in the Movumbi district, and Ñwahoñwana, in the Mabota clan, were those to whom such applications were made. These are the ceremonies of initiation amongst the Ba-Ronga.

The master takes all the bones collected by the apprentice, kills a fowl, introduces them into the body, (2) and cooks the whole. Then the candidate eats the fowl, returns home with his bones and buries the astragalus on the road, at the entrance of the village. He hides himself there, on watch. When a woman passes, he exhumes a female astragalus; when a man, a male one: the he-goat, when it is a man of ripe age, the kid, when it is a boy, etc. In this way all his bones are said to "have returned to him". Then he again calls on the master. The old man orders him to close his eyes and puts before him all his bones in a line; the candidate must recognise them all by touch and take them all one after the other, pronouncing the name of each one. The examination evidently aims at ascertaining if he knows them thoroughly well Having successfully passed through the trial, the new diviner must undergo a hondlola: a long ablution with nkuhlu leaves, after which he is initiated; he has the right of asking payment in cash, as much as three pence. For one shilling, he will consent to throw the bones all day until they have revealed everything

Amongst the Nkuna the initiation is somewhat different: the apprentice does not exert his art until he has earned a goat. He practises in foreign villages, where he is not known and where people believe that he has already been initiated. Having

(1) The divinatory basket of Spoon is shewn on the plate p. 107, N° 2.

(2) I suppose that he adds his own bones to those of the applicant, in order that their divinatory virtue may enter the bones of the candidate. This is the rule followed in the Nkuna initiation. See later on.

succeeded, he brings the animal to the master and will then "have his bones cooked for him" (a ta psekeriwa bula). One of the forelegs and the diaphragm are put in a pot together with a root called banga. The set of bones of the master and that of the apprentice are added to them, and the whole is cooked. When the meat is done, the contents of the pot are poured into a lihlelo basket and both draw in the broth with their lips. Then they eat the meat cut in pieces without touching it with their hands, seizing it with their teeth alone, "the same as vultures do, those vultures, which scent meat from far away". The heart of one of these birds has been cooked with the other drugs "so that the new diviner will be able to dream of things which are far away and go straight to them". He will be able to go and guess anything at once without fear nor hesitation.

The bones having remained in the lihlelo basket, another drug is used to wash them: it is the bark of a tree called *mbandjwa*. Then the new diviner must show his power of divination: all his astragalus being mixed with those of the master, he must choose them without an error, calling them by the name he gave them. If he fails, the trial must be renewed after a time: he returns home and the bones are given a rest; he then comes another day and the two sets are dipped again (in beer, this time); the beer having been drunk by both the master and the apprentice, the bones are washed, thrown and the latter must now choose them again. He will probably succeed, and so becomes a master. But the old diviner gives him one of the bones of his own set, which will "reign over the set of the initiated". This bone will always be first considered: it is the *father* and the *mother* of the set. If the other bones indicate bad omen, the new diviner will not be troubled as long as the king of the set shows good one. If, on the other hand, the king is in the — position, or in the × position, the young man will fear to pronounce a favourable prognostic!

The diviner (wa bula) is in most cases at the same time a ñanga, a medicine-man, and he will propably initiate the candidate in the knowledge of his drugs also. "Because", said Mankhelu, "to possess the Word alone is of little use: you

want also the *mbhulo*, the magic medicines". The price paid to the initiator was formerly 80 hoes, or a wife, and the initiated, when calling at the village of his master, used to sleep in the hut of that woman. Being in possession of these new qualifications the new diviner has the right of *planting his magic forked branch* (shiphandje. See Illustration I. p. 5 and II p. 450). This rite is subject to many rules which the initiator teaches his pupil; the latter must dig a certain quantity of white sand in a deep pool, and bury it in his hut where he intends placing the branch. This will henceforth be "planted in the abyss" (shidziba). Should the hut burn, should enemies put fire to it, water will spring from the bottom and prevent the shipandje being consumed. Moreover a sacrifice is made to the ancestors who transmitted their drugs to the initiator, and the psanyi of the slaughtered sheep is used to smear the branch. An intimate relation remains between the old doctor and his pupil. When the former dies, the latter must "raise", or "awake his drugs" by a number of ceremonies which aim at removing the defilement that comes upon them through that death. These are rules which apply to medicine-men as well as to diviners.

The forked pole is both the laboratory and the altar (it is also called gandjelo, p. 326) and the museum of the magician. He hangs to it his calabashes of drugs, his basket of bones, the psirungulo (part of the victims preserved as religious amulets, p. 326) and anything precious he may possess. When Mankhelu had made some money by his bone-throwing or his medical practices, he used to expose the coins during the night at the foot of the branch, in order to inform his gods of his success!

I could not say, if in former times, the diviners *formed a class* in the tribe, better defined, more close and secret than now. It may be so, as the hondlola by which they pass from apprenticeship to mastership is a real aggregation rite, by which they enter a new condition and acquire a special position. At every new moon henceforth they will have to wash their bones ritually in order to remove the defilement of the preceding month, after which they smear them with psanyi.

When a diviner sees that he does not succeed in his forecasts, he consults another member of the confraternity who tells him to offer such and such a victim to an ancestor-god who was himself a bone-thrower and who is supposed to have given the bones to his unsuccessful descendant. The spirit of interpretation of the deceased will enter into the supplicant.

In order to attract customers, Mankhelu kept a little pellet of black grease amongst his bones. When arriving somewhere to practise his art, he took a little of it and put it on a glowing cinder, disposed the bones all round, and the smoke which rose from the fat went to call the people. "So I saw one coming from this direction with an ox, another from another direction with a goat and made good profit!"

Women can also become bone-throwers, but this is a rare occurrence.

5) The importance of the divinatory bones.

From all the preceding information it is easy to gather that the art of bone-throwing is by no means child's play, nor a mere quackery by which astute sooth-sayers deceive their credulous fellows. It is a real art which diviners practise *in all sincerity*, believing themselves that they receive objective revelations through it. This sincerity is attested by many proofs :

1) The fact, already mentioned, that it is not a secret, esoteric art, but that every one knows its rules and takes part in the interpretation.

2) The confidence which diviners have in the power of their bones, and the strong attachment which they profess for their divinatory basket. (1) Each of their astragalus bears a name which reminds them

(1) The conversation, just referred to, which I had with Mankhelu after his explanation of the unfulfilled prophecy, is very striking in this respect. Its conclusion was the following : — "Mankhelu", I said to him, "you see that your bones deceive you! They are old, dry, dead things which cannot help you! Come to the light of the true Revelation of Jesus Christ." — "You are right, Moneri", answered my friend. "I am old! I cannot use my bones any more, as I no longer travel for trading or treating! I will have to come to the Church by and by." — "If that is so, let me have your basket; it interests me very much. I will pay for it." — "He! Moneri! Impos-

of the person who gave it to them, the circumstance in which it was found, and some of the successes of their career. Their whole life is connected with these bones, which they really love and to which they are bound by all the fibres of their heart!

Of course diviners are *shrewd*! Their interpretation does not proceed from mathematic evidence, but from their prodigious imagination. Tortoise in the negative position may at the same time mean black earth, death, defilement, well swept village, burnt bush, according to the requirements of the case; but this is fair play and everybody approves of this ingenuity: it is not a conscious attempt to deceive. It is evident that the predictions often remain unfulfilled, as did the prophecy of Mankhelu. Or the exact reverse of the forecast happens. One of my evangelists, Filipi Mabemane, when still a heathen, went to consult a Matjolo diviner regarding the birth of a child which was to take place shortly. "It will be a boy, and he will live" was the answer. In fact, it was a girl and she died! So many people are more or less sceptic and say: "Tinhlolo i ntlhangana na pso!" — "The bones say the truth when per chance it so happens!" However the faith is not impaired for a long time! The anxiety to know the future is so great that one consults again, but not the same diviner. People say: "Psa mu hlula", — "He has been overcome", and they go to another! Qualified doctors sometimes experience similar treatment even amongst the Whites! Viguet once quarelled with a bone-thrower. The man of the art contended that he always said the truth. "What have you told me?" said Viguet. "You told me that I should get plenty of oxen and goats. Where are they? And why did you not tell me: "Hanya, hanya, hanya... Live, live, live... there will be days when something will happen and we shall quarrel!" But the sceptics are rare. Faith in the bones is blind, but it is great!

How can this confidence which both diviners and their customers have in the divinatory bones be explained?

Does it come from a *religious belief*? It is not easy to define to what extent the divinatory art rests on religion. On the one hand, the spirit

sible!" — "Why? At any rate sell me the Son, if you want to keep the Father!" — "No! I want to keep the Son." — "Then give me the Father!" — "Never!" said he quite scandalised. — "You see that you have still your heart in it, old chap!" — "Yes. When a child has dysentery, can I leave it so? Must I not consult the bones to know what drug to give?..." I did not succeed that day in buying either Son or Father. However the diviner died some years later and his heirs consented to sell me one of his sets, which is now in my possession.

of interpretation of the bones comes from the ancestor-gods who were bone-throwers themselves, and they are invoked to give or to revive this spirit. Mankhelu even told me that the prophecy of the arrival of the strangers had been given to him by his deceased father Shiluvane. But the Bula, the Word, is not generally considered as being the utterance of the ancestor-gods. The bones are, in a certain sense, *superior to the gods* whose intentions they disclose. The Bula is the revelation of a somewhat impersonal power, independent of the gods.

It seems to me that the divinatory art is *essentially magical*; it is entirely founded on the great axioms of Dynamism, and I think that this is the explanation of its value for the Bantu. The first of these axioms is: "*pars pro toto*", the axiom according to which the portion acts instead of the whole: the astragalus, one bone, represents the entire animal, and its fate indicates the fate of the whole body. The second — "like acts on like", — is an axiom which I would call: *the law of correspondence*. The savage mind, endowed with such a vivid and extraordinary imagination, instinctively establishes correspondences between objects of a very different nature, which have been placed in connection for various reasons, especially owing to external similarity. Thus the human beings are represented by animals which resemble them in a certain point: the reed-buck, wandering during the night, signifies the wizards who do the same; the hyena, which eats the remains of the feasts of the lion, is the parasite following the chief, etc. There are thus signifying and signified objects: the fate of the signifying object will be the fate of the signified. This conclusion, to which an enlightened mind would certainly object, is forced on the mind of the primitive, plunged in the twilight of his animistic conceptions, by a kind of self evidence. He has a much deeper intuition of the unity of the animal and the human world than we have. Spoon once told me mysteriously: "The astragalus of the goat truly represents the people of the village because these animals live in it, they know us, they know what is in us". This is probably the deep, hidden reason why the diviners believe in their art.

On the other hand, this art is so perfect that bone-throwers can find any amount of satisfaction in practising it. Consider that, in fact, all the elements of Native life are represented by the objects contained in the basket of the divinatory bones. It is a resumé of all their social order, of all their institutions, and the bones, when they fall, provide them with instantaneous photographs of all that can happen to them. This system is so elaborate that I do not hesitate to say that, together

with their folklore, their lobola customs and their burial rites, it is the most intelligent product of their psychic life. The premises of divination being accepted, astragalomancy seems to me vastly superior to cheiromancy and all the other systems which have been invented by us. Some reasons might lead us to think that this system of Divination is very old in the evolution of mankind. I read somewhere that, amongst ancient Greeks, the oracle of Heracles practised astragalomancy. It has been impossible for me to discover in what it consisted. The Greek word ἀστραγαλος means both the astragalus bone and the dice, and it is not difficult to understand why: take one of these bones, shape it a little at both extremities and you easily obtain a cube with six facets. So it is most probable that dice are a fuller development of the astragalus bone and that, before throwing the dice, primitive men have thrown the astragalus. Bantu (1) have preserved this custom as they did that of the wooden pillow of the old Egyptians, that of the ancestrolatry of the Mousterians (p. 408) and that of the mbaya (p. 78) of the Libyans.

But if this system of divination is a token of great intelligence, it must be confessed that *its results*, in the psychic life of the tribe, are most *deplorable*. These practices kill in ovo any serious attempt to use reason or experience in the practical life. Native doctors might have arrived at a useful and beneficial knowledge of the medicinal virtues of vegetables, if they had studied them properly. But what is the use of troubling themselves with study, when a single cast of the bones at once tells them what root must be taken to cure the disease? (Compare my account of diagnosis, p. 432). More than this: the bones annihilate the moral conscience, or, at any rate, they prevent any healthy development of this so precious faculty. When overtaken by misfortune the Bantu might be ready for introspection to review his conduct, to see what wrong he may have done. From this self examination, a moral progress might result. But this trouble is useless!

(1) Astragalus are used for divination amongst most of the South African tribes: the Ba-Suto of Basutoland, the Pedi of the Transvaal, the Ba-Rotse of Zambesi, the Nyandja of Lake Nyassa. In the Northern Transvaal Ba-Pedi use conjunctively the astragalus and the four pieces of ivory, two male and two female; the adult male, Lehwami, the young male, Selume, the adult female, Thwahalime and the young female, Thohwane. These four objects have two faces each, and can fall in 16 different ways, each of which has its name and signification. This is a totally different system, the laws of which I have found out, but which I cannot publish here. The astragalus system is vastly superior.

The bones are thrown. They reveal that misfortune was caused by such and such spiritual influences, wizards, gods, defilement, Heaven, that it must be combated by such and such means: a drug, or a packet of drugs, a victim, male or female, offered by so and so, in such and such manner. This is all sufficient and the conscience remains sleeping (1) and so does the reason. I am convinced that, whatever may be the astuteness engendered by the divinatory bones, they have been extremely detrimental to the intellectual and moral welfare of the Natives.

This leads us to our last chapter, in which the questions of Taboo and Morality will be considered.

(1) Wishing to know if the bones were sometimes used to obtain moral guidance, I once asked Mankhelu: "As you throw your bones on every occasion, would you consult them when going to a beer party? There might be trouble, perhaps quarrels, blows... If you want to avoid them would the bones tell you to abstain from the party?" He laughed heartily. "No!" said he. "If I see the men drink too much I would leave before they were quite drunk". I have some doubts if he would really have done so. But what is certain is that bones have nothing to do with morality!

CHAPTER IV

Taboo and Morality.

When taking the trouble to carefully study the life of the so-called savages, one very soon notices that, instead of being free of all law and of all restraint, as superficial observers believe, their life is, on the contrary, subject to a great number of rules and prohibitions, which enslave those primitives in the bonds of custom and tradition. These prohibitions are of two principal kinds. Those which are the most obvious are *the taboos*. We have met with them at each page in these two volumes. They play an immense part in the conduct of the raw Native. But, besides these, there are other restraints which seem to originate from totally different notions, *the moral principles*. The relation between taboo and moral conceptions is very difficult to determine. It is actually one of the most debated questions of Anthropology; I will try to show what is the state of things in that phase of human development to which the Thonga of South Africa have attained.

A. THE TABOO

I have ventured to give a provisional definition of the *vila*, or *taboo*, of the Thonga, when we met with the first interdiction of that kind, Vol. I. page 36: "Any object, any act, any person that implies a danger for the individual or for the community, and that must consequently be avoided, this object, act or person being under a kind of ban". After having explained hundreds of taboos, I do not feel the need of altering this defini-

tion. Its main element is this: the object, act or person taboed constitutes a danger. (1) It must be avoided.

I. *Classification of taboos.*

Let us now sum up our study of taboos by attempting to classify them.

The most primitive of all are those which are called by Modern Ethnographers *the sympathetic taboos*, those which man instinctively observes to preserve his life, to avoid suffering. To touch a burning ember, a fire, is taboo. Thonga sometimes use the word yila for such prohibitions: for instance they say "psa yila" for a little child to play with a knife. But this category of taboos, which impose themselves on man with a kind of self-evidence, do not play a special part in Thonga customs.

1) The first category I would dwell upon are the *physiological taboos*.

a) First those connected with *defilement*. When dealing with physiological notions (p. 335), we noticed that there are five or six physiological phenomena which are considered as attended with special danger, because they are the great *agents of defilement*: the menstrual flow, the lochia, disease, death and the birth of twins. Those who have been defiled by one or another of these agents are taboo; they are subject to a number of interdictions, in order to avoid fatal contagion; in most cases, they have to pass through a marginal period, at the end of which they are again aggregated to society. Hence a great many taboos which I would call the *proper physiological taboos*. The *sexual taboos*, the *special feminine taboos* (I. p. 184) naturally belong to this category, in which I would also include the *military taboos* in connection with

(1) The word *yila* very closely corresponds to the term taboo so widely used in Anthropology. In current speech it is sometimes employed in a wider sense, in cases where the notion of danger is not clearly present, but this is certainly an extension of the meaning. In fact the *yila proper* exactly answers to the definition just given.

the slayers (I. p. 454), and those which underly the strange *hunting rites* (p. 57-62), as all these seem to proceed from the idea of defilement through death. *Adultery* is taboo because the husband fears "the bad bloods" by which his wife may have been contaminated through her misconduct. As far as the respect of the *totem* is considered necessary for the maintenance of the health of the clansman, I would also call physiological the taboos of this order which are, however, very few in number amongst the Thonga (I. p. 327).

b) Another variety of the same category are *the taboos connected with growth, change of condition,* or *with the various initiations* through which a Native may be called to pass. The whole life for these primitives consists, as already stated, in a succession of stages; one must proceed from one to the other through ceremonies in which a number of taboos can be noticed. The individual, who ascends from an inferior stage to a superior one, always passes through a marginal period by which he separates from the former and is aggregated to the latter. In this case the seclusion is not due to defilement properly speaking; it is in connection with the idea of *growth*. Hence all the taboos of *tying the cotton string,* (I. p. 54), *of weaning* (I. p. 57), when passing from infancy to childhood, *of puberty* (when entering the adult life through circumcision), *of marriage* (when being received within the group of married people); the initiation to the society of the possessed, to the profession of magician, or diviner, are attended with similar taboos.

All the taboos of this category seem to have been actuated by the idea of danger accompanying ritual impurity, or passage from one condition to another.

2) A second category of taboos, much less numerous, are the *cosmic taboos*. Nature prohibits certain acts; if they are committed, rain will not fall, and the community will suffer. The prohibition of cutting the roots at the new moon (p. 283), of tilling the fields when a shower falls in the morning (p. 28), of warming one self at a fire of parasite plants and at the ntjhopfa (p. 18), and some agricultural taboos belong to this category. Some of the most severe physiological taboos, those connected

with twins, and with unlawfully buried children, become cosmic, inasmuch as they prevent rain from falling (p. 294).

3) A third kind of taboos are those I call *taboos of prevision*. Foresight is dangerous on certain occasions : Do not build your hut before being married ! (I. p. 238). Do not prepare the ntehe before the birth of your child (I. p. 44), nor your ngula basket before harvest ! The travellers' taboos (p. 56) might also be included in this class.

4) A fourth category comprises the manifold *social taboos*, *viz.*, those actions which are prohibitedbecause they would be dangerous to the social order. Exogamous laws (I. p. 242), hlonipha customs, viz., the taboing of certain words by the chief (I. p. 356), and especially the curious taboos to be observed in the intercourse of allied families (I. p. 257), are social. The taboos connected with the moving of a village (I. p. 288) are physiological in so far as they are actuated by the fear of defilement, and social in so far as they try to maintain the life of the social organism, which is the *muti*. But those which mostly bear the character of social taboos are those connected with the idea of *hierarchy*. We have met with them in the ceremonies of the first fruits (1) (I. p. 367) and in the rules of sowing. It is taboo to "precede" a chief, or an elder brother, in agricultural operations, sowing or harvesting !

5) This leads us to a fifth category : the *religious taboos*. The ancestor-gods, being the elders of the actual members of the family, must be treated as hierarchically superior ; hence the religious taboo of luma : interdiction of eating the new crop before having presented the gods with the first fruits ; the prohibition of infringing the sacerdotal rights of an elder brother (p. 387) is a taboo of the same kind. We notice here the intimate relation between the social and the religious life in

(1) The *luma* taboos are social and religious ; but they also belong to the first variety of physiological taboos in so far as they are actuated by the fear of defilement (food of a deceased, Vol. I. p. 146) ; to the second variety in so far as they are connected with a change of condition : first use of a new crop (I. p. 366), of a new meat (p. 62), of a new implement (p. 100), or fishing trap (p. 69). (Notice the relation between khangula, to inaugurate, and luma).

Ancestrolatry. Forgetfulness of fulfilling duties towards gods (p. 387), killing green snakes (p. 358) are also religious taboos.

6) I include in a sixth category the *language taboos*, ku ruketela, viz., the use of obscene expressions not allowed in ordinary life. The words designating the sexual act and the various parts of the genital organs *yila*; but there are substitutes for them, euphemisms which can be used instead of them. When a child employs such words, people scold him and say to him: " Psa yila ! Do you think we are cleaning the wells ?" This remark is due to the fact that the language taboos are suspended during the marginal periods and especially during the "mourning of the land", when the rains are delayed and people try to make them fall by the rite of cleaning the wells (p. 296). The language taboos are related to the social taboos, to use obscene words leads to the destruction of social order, and this is allowed only when that order is really destroyed, for instance during the mbelele rite (p. 295), during the time of moving the village (I. p. 288), and during mourning ceremonies (I. p. 160).

These six categories, although they are not absolutely distinct, are a convenient means of classifying the taboos.

II. *Some remarks about the taboos.*

1) What is their *origin ?* It is not impossible to trace it in a number of cases. The *blonipha taboos*, for instance, are proclaimed by the chiefs under certain special circumstances (I. p 357). The taboo concerning *the planting of new fruit trees* is explained by the coincidence of the desolation of a ruined village with the presence of such trees (p. 30). Such coincidences, amounting to bad omens, have no doubt given birth to numerous taboos. If misfortune has followed a certain act two or three times, a hasty generalisation is made by the primitive mind : post hoc ergo propter hoc ! So the act is tabooed. But most often taboos are inexplicable ; their origin is the animistic of dynamistic superstition itself (p. 345) and that

superstition is instinctive, unconscient and consequently unaccountable.

2) Whence is their *sanction*? Inasmuch as taboos have been proclaimed by conscious agents, their transgression will meet with a punishment from those agents. A chief will sue a subject using a hlonipha word. Gods will punish those who transgress the law of hierarchy, who pass all bounds in their incontinence, who forget their duties towards them (p. 387). But, in most of the cases, the decree is not enforced by a conscious agent. The *taboo avenges itself directly*. Consumption, the swelling of the legs, the impossibility of passing water, disease of one kind or another will follow the transgression, or the children will be covered with an eruption of pimples.

3) How are taboos dealt with?

Happily the danger of the taboos can be removed, otherwise life would be nearly impossible! The medicine-men have the necessary drugs to protect their poor fellow-men against misfortune (khombo), which always threatens them! Is not all the arsenal of magic at their disposal? Rites in great number provide the needed protection, especially the *luma rite*, which is the proper means of avoiding the special dangers connected with the *first* use of something. The wish to obtain protection against all these dangers explains the immense influence of the medicine-men, of those who know the preventive drugs to be used against defilement and misfortune.

4) One cannot reach a true knowledge of the taboos if one has not studied the laws of *their suspension*. Taboos are sometimes suspended. For instance the chief is above them, at any rate above some of them, being himself a magical being, a tabooed personage (I. p. 355). The collectivity has still a greater power over them and can cancel them. There are times when all these prohibitions, or at least some of them, are recalled; these are the marginal periods when we assist at the strange spectacle of ordinary taboos suspended (language taboos, relatives-in-law taboos), whilst others are enforced (sexual taboos). I have often drawn attention to this curious phenomenon.

B. MORAL RESTRAINTS

But taboos are not the only kind of restraint to which primitive Bantus submit themselves. Hear the following declarations gathered from old or young informants when urged to express their inner feelings on this question :

1) The maternal uncle must provide the ntehe for the first child of his sister. However this is not *yila*, it is a *nau*, a law, and if it is transgressed no direct harm will follow. (I. p. 45).

2) Men and women do not bathe in the same spot, in the lake of Rikatla. Why? Not on account of a yila, but on account of *shitshabo*, viz., fear, or respect. (1) There is no danger in transgressing that law of decency... However it is condemned.

3) When a young man has transgressed the taboo of *matlulana* (I. p. 195), having had sexual relations with the same woman as another man, he is not allowed to attend the burial of his rival. It is a taboo. However if the deceased be his own father the culprit can be treated with drugs, and so fulfil his duty of grave-digger, being protected against the danger of his condition : "The *yila* has been removed, but the *biha* remains." *Biha* means that which is bad.

So there are three domains, besides the yila, in which the Native feels the restraints imposed on him : law or custom, respect or decency, and duty or *fanelo*. We might add a fourth one, the disgust for a certain food (p. 66). The great difference between the taboo and the other prohibitions is that the transgression of the latter is not necessarily attended with danger. (2)

Let us consider more closely the idea of *fanelo*, or duty.

Fanelo comes from *ku fana*, to be alike ; fanela is what is

(1) I have heard the mixed bathing of men and women also called a yila ; but it is a special kind of yila, *the yila of tshabisa*, the taboo of respect or decency.

(2) I would, however, not insist too much on the distinctiveness of these five domains. Theft and murder are prohibited on account of *duty*, but they become taboo if the culprit is discovered, because they will bring punishment upon him. The moral wrong of these acts has been perceived *before* their dangerous character, and here we have an instance of a taboo grafted on a moral, or social, prohibition.

seemly, becoming. This is not yet a very high notion of morality. However the moral sense certainly exists and this is proved by three facts :

1) The richness of expressions which the *dictionary* possesses to indicate moral notions. There are more words applying to the negative side of the notion and signifying *bad*, than to the positive, signifying *good* ; a phenomenon which can be noticed in most primitive languages, even in our French patois. *Ku biha* means to be bad, morally speaking, and to be ugly esthetically speaking. The distinctiveness of the two domains exists, however, in the mind of the Native. He says: "behile mbilu" — "is bad in his heart", or "behile liso" — "is ugly as regards his face." *Shibi*, the derivate noun of the verb ku biha, is regularly used in Djonga to mean *sin*. It also designates the offensive object which a child or a careless person may have deposited on the path, instead of following the rules of the W. C. of Native villages. (I. p. 281). But besides biha is *dyoha* (Dj), *doha* (Ro), to commit a wrong, *hona* (Ro), *onha* (Dj), to spoil, but also to sin, from which *shihono*, the proper word for sin in Ronga. *Somboloka* means to be irremediably bad, crooked, like a stem which cannot be made straight any more.

On the contrary the adjective *nene*, corresponding to biha, embraces three meanings: good, nice, and true, the derivate *bunene* designating rather goodness and beauty, and another derivative, *psinene*, truth ; the verb used for to be good is *shonga* (Ro), or *saseka* (Dj), and has both the moral and esthetic signification. *Ku lulama* is to be straight, as a stem, and the use of this word discloses a deep and clear sense of right doing. Many other expressions might be quoted showing that the notion of moral good and bad is certainly present in the Native mind, quite independently of that of taboo. They also recognise the *conscience* (timpfalu), seated in the diaphragm (p. 338).

2) *Intercourse with Natives* proves the same thing. Though their ideas may differ from ours as regards what is good (1),

(1) The idea of charity is particulary low : charity is due only to relatives, or to clansmen, and not to foreigners. I remember a man of the Manyisa clan,

they are certainly moral beings, feeling strongly the imperative of conscience.

3) Their *folklore* is the best and most objective proof that this is so. Vice is punished, and virtue rewarded in all the tales which I have called *moral*, and they certainly contain a whole code of natural and elementary morality (p. 203). The pangs of conscience in a criminal are depicted in a wonderful way in Zili, for instance.

However, it must be confessed that this morality is low, that it does not possess a very strong hold on the Native soul, and that the imperative of conscience is by no means the categorical imperative of Kant! If you can steal without being caught, you may steal! Such is the advice given generally! To tell lies is mere play which few people take seriously, especially if the lies are not intended to do harm to your fellow-men. There is a great laxness in Native morals. Why? I am convinced that this weakness of the moral feeling comes from the fact that the moral law is not considered as having been proclaimed by a personal, transcendental God. There is no relation established between duty and the divinity. The religion is non-moral. The ancestor-gods themselves are non-moral. The absolute character of the moral law can only come from the absolute character of a God who has established it. For the Bantu the law, *nau*, is the *interest of the clan*. Theft is bad because it ruins the individual property, and it is necessary to respect property, otherwise the collective life becomes impossible. So theft, blows, insults, murder, and witchcraft are condemned and punished, because these actions endanger society and its recognised modes of life But if society is not aware of it, you may steal; you are not guilty; no one has been offended! This principle gives to the morality of Natives a very curious *juridical character*, which White people are sometimes very slow to understand. A man is not guilty if he has not been con-

who nearly died near the lake of Rikatla, having been hurt when working on the railway; nobody took pity on him, because he belonged to another clan. He was saved by a converted woman, Lois, who had wonderfully understood the new principles of universal brotherhood.

victed of his fault by a regular judgment. He does not even feel himself guilty. But if his sin be proved, then he at once gives up all subterfuge (Compare Zidji, p. 206). We thus come to this conclusion : if the great fault of Bantu religion is that it is non-moral, that of Bantu morality is that it is non-religious. No supreme legislator has ordained it. Hence the want of the notion of the absolute in the imperative of the Bantu conscience.

Notwithstanding, the rudiments of morality are present in the Thonga conscience, feeling of duty, the sense of right and wrong, and these are independent from the essentially interested notion of taboo.

C. RELATION BETWEEN TABOO, SACREDNESS AND MORALITY

Modern Ethnographers see in the taboo notion the origin of that of sacredness, and of morality. Amongst South African Bantu, the notion of sacredness is not a prominent one. It may be said that the person of the chief is sacred for them, being set apart; the law of hierarchy, the right of precedence belonging to the elder brother is also sacred, and this conception is very nearly allied to that of taboo, though it does not necessarily contain the idea of danger. But if sacredness has been in certain cases a natural development of taboo, I do not think this is the case with moral notions.

In some cases, morality distinctly preceded taboo : speaking of theft, we have just seen the taboo conception grafted on a primitive moral notion; we have also met with a taboo evolving from a notion of disgust (nyenya) (p. 66); or from decency (p. 530). I do not pretend that it could be proved that the moral restraint, in all cases, preceded the taboo prohibition. Nothing on the other hand allows one to assert that the moral notions are a natural development of original taboos; these two sets of notions seem to be parallel in the domain of conduct, just as Ancestrolatry and the notion of an All-Father are in religion.

CONCLUSION

I have reached the end of my study of the Life of a South African tribe in its principal manifestations, social and psychic. To write a complete anthropological monograph, I ought to have also dealt at length with the physical features of the Thonga. This would have led me too far. However I have taken a few anthropometric measures, which will be published in the Bulletin de la Société neuchâteloise de Géographie pour 1913, together with an explanation kindly written by Doctor E. Pittard of Geneva, whose competence in this domain is well-known. Now I come to my conclusion. The aim of this book being twofold, scientific and practical, I will try to answer in these last pages two great questions, one belonging to Science: How far can the actual South Africans be called Primitives? the other, being of superior practical importance: How can the South African tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by the XXth century civilisation?

I. *How far can the actual South African Bantu be called Primitives?*

One often hears of Primitive Humanity. Do the South African tribes belong to it? This is a very difficult question to answer, as we do not exactly know what Primitive Humanity was and what the evolution of these tribes has been. In the absence of any old written record, of any remains of an ancient stone civilisation, we can only make suppositions. But they are based on three sets of facts: Native traditions (to which, however, we must always apply severe criticism), traces of an old and obsolete past actually found in the language or in the rites, and comparison with early civilisations now discovered in palaeolithic stations, or apparent on the ancient Egyptian monuments, etc. I do not pretend to have obtained positive evidence on all points, and I introduce a good number of interrogation marks in this attempt. However we know that Science proceeds by successive approximations. I submit my table of the development of civilisation in the South African tribe as an hypothesis, open to any amendment which further discoveries may suggest.

I hesitated before writing anything about the *first period*. A number of Native traditions declare that, at a remote time, their forefathers did

not know *fire*, (I. p. 23 II. p. 32). According to some Pedi informants, fire would be of relatively recent origin amongst certain clans. However we cannot believe that fire ever was absolutely absent, seeing that the cave dwellers of the Mousterian age, at the end of the glacial period, knew it, as attested by the fire places found everywhere in the Mousterian deposits. It is probable that the first ancestors of the Thonga lived on roots and fruit, having but very simple weapons, and hardly any clothing. This condition of things may have prevailed long before the Bantu stock was formed. The race perhaps passed through the totemic phase, which is still regnant amongst more primitive races (I. p. 335), and has left some traces amongst the Thonga, up to this day. Mother-right, the remnants of which are so clear, was probably the family system of these times of which we know nothing definite. In what did it consist? This is impossible to say and the only feature of which we are sure is that female descent prevailed during that period. Funeral rites probably existed, as they are met with in Mousterian sepultures, and they imply, as shown previously, the belief in Ancestrolatry. Who knows if the idea of an All-Father, which is almost universal in primitive humanity, was not already existent? It seems as if the notion of the divine, under one form or another, was one of the earliest ideas of the human mind. Nay! that its appearance in the dim consciousness of this ancient being from whom we descend was the signal of his accession o real humanity... But this is speculation, and I do not wish here to leave the solid ground of Science.

In a *second period*, whose beginning it is impossible to fix and which I consequently separate from the first one by dots, in the table, animals are domesticated, the goat probably first. Agriculture sets in. The soil is tilled with wooden hoes (?). Male descent supplants female descent and patriarchate becomes the family system ; its further development leads to the formation of the clan : an enlarged patriarchal family. I suppose that it is in this condition that the Bantu stock was founded. Language was probably the Ur-Bantu, and it is very interesting to reconstitute its main elements, grammatical features, and dictionary, by comparison with the actual Bantu dialects. Things called by the same word in all existing dialects were probably existing at that time. (1) I suppose the physiological taboos were already

(1) However, one ought not to push this argument too far. I have been able to ascertain that the fowl was unknown amongst the Pedi clans of

	Costume	Implements Weapons	Food	Trade	State	Fam syst
1st Period (Pre-Bantu)	*Men.* Mbaya? *Women.* Skins?	Wooden clubs?	Fruits and roots.	?	Half sedentary?	Fem desce
2d Period Ur-Bantu till 1500	id.	Pottery. Basketwork. Wooden hoes? Bows? Wooden pillow.	Goat. Millet, Pumpkins. Game caught in traps.	Exchange of ware against produce.	Agricultural.	Male de
3d Period 1500-1820	*Men:* Mbaya. *Women:* Skirts. of cloth.	Pottery. Basketwork. Iron hoes and assagais. Bows.	Goat. Sheep? Ox? Millet. Sorghum? Beans?	Godji (p 126). *Sales* Amber, Ivory, Skins, etc. *Purchases* Stuff, Beads, Copper, Iron.	id.	Patriar Lobo Polyga
4th Period 1820-1910	*Men:* Zulu belt. *Women:* Skirts Keimao.	id. Guns. Bows disappear.	id. Maize, Peas, Bananas, Mangoes, etc.	*S.* Mafusreira, India-rubber. Skins. Commercial expeditions. Introduction of European money.	Agricultural. Yearly military expeditions in Gaza.	id. Decre of Polyg
1910	Increase of European dress.	Increase of European implements. Decrease in Native arts and crafts.	id. European food. Alcohol.	Decrease of Native trade.	Work in towns.	id. Family injured long ab of me

in force then, as they are found nearly identical amongst Semitic people, as shown in Leviticus. The hierarchy must have soon followed

Northern Transvaal, in the beginning of the XVIIIth century, having been introduced by the Malemba some time about 1750. Notwithstanding, the Pedi call it *khugu*, same word as *huku* in Thonga, Ur-Bantu *kuku*. The name of the thing may have been introduced at the same time as the thing itself, and incorporated by undergoing the phonetic permutations required by the dialect. (Compare Folklore, Sept. 1908, The Balemba).

THE THONGA TRIBE

Tribal system	Military system	Language	Folklore	Religion	Taboo	Magic
Totemism?	?	?	?	Ancestrolatry. All-Father?	Sympathetic.	?
Clan.	?	Ur-Bantu? Sex denoting suffixes. 11 Classes of Nouns. Formation of Thonga.	Mythological conceptions. Tales.	Ancestrolatry. All-Father.	Physiological Hierarchic. Agricultural.	Witchcraft. Astragalomancy.
Invasion of neighbouring clans.	Linear formation. Skirmishes.	Thonga. 8 Classes of Nouns. Six dialects.	Decrease of Mythology. Rich folklore.	Ancestrolatry. Clearer notion of Tilo, All-Father.	id.	id.
Formation and disappearance of military kingdoms. Total Control. (I. p. 460)	Zulu circular formation. Cruel wars.	Progress of Ronga dialect. Adoption of European expressions (Portuguese, Dutch and English).	Addition of Asiatic and Portuguese elements.	Ancestrolatry. Tilo conception less clear. Christianity. Islam. Possessions.	id. Military.	id. Possessions.
Authority of Chiefs decreases.	Decrease of military and political spirit.	id.	id.	id. Progress of Christianity.	Severity of taboos decreases.	id.

the institution of patriarchism, and of the clan. Witchcraft probably existed; it must have been a belief of primitive humanity, as it is still present under a very similar form amongst peasants and uncultured people in civilised lands. We have the right to suppose also that astragalomancy was practised. Some features of the Thonga language show that mythological conceptions prevailed then, which seem to have nearly entirely disappeared nowadays (I. p. 35. II. p. 283). This period must have lasted for tens, perhaps hundreds of centuries.

until the South African tribes, after endless migrations, reached their present abode, probably pushing the early occupants towards the South ; at the end of the XV^th^ century we find the Thonga tribe located near Delagoa Bay. (1)

The third period is inaugurated by the invasion by the clans mentioned in our Introduction. White men appear, trade begins, stuffs are adopted by women, the men keeping their mbaya. Iron is introduced both by these invaders, and by the White whale-fishers and traders. Agriculture takes a new development : so also do military tactics, the Natives now possessing better weapons. A decided progress has certainly taken place all round, the invading population being superior in civilisation to the old one. The Thonga language is definitely formed with its six dialects. Folklore is enriched by the contributions of all the various clans. Ancestrolatry still reigns in the religious beliefs, with a relatively clear notion of Heaven and of an All-Father. The change was gradual until 1820.

Fourth period. At that time a new period begins, owing to the profound disturbance caused by the invasion of the Ngoni army under Manukosi. The costume of men changes. The clans are amalgamated under the Zulu conqueror. The military spirit increases. War, accompanied with blood-shed and all the Zulu apparatus, replaces the skirmishes of former times. In Gazaland the year is divid-

(1) The *Lourenço Marques Guardian*, in a very kind review of Vol. I (Oct. 7, 1912), expresses the regret that I have not dwelt longer on the first origin and migrations of the Thonga tribe. The writer thinks that this was formerly a much larger tribe "the basic element in the Hamitic invasion of the coastal region". As far as I know, there is no document on which we may base evidence on such questions. The Portuguese chronicles of the XVI^th^ and XVII^th^ centuries describe a state of things which is quite modern compared with the first Bantu invasion of South Africa, that of the *Zindj* to which Masoudi's "Golden Meadows" make an allusion, A. D. 943. When the Portuguese travellers reached the Delagoa Bay shore, the stream of migrations had already taken an Eastern or North-Eastern direction (I. p. 23). — As regards inferences drawn from the wide-spread term *Thonga* (Ronga, Tonga), I think they have very little value as this word probably means "people of the East", as *Kalanga* people of the North. It is applied by Natives to those tribes which dwell eastwards of them, whatever their origin may be. This is a geographical designation, as the term Orientals, and it discloses nothing as regards the ethnological features of the tribes to which it is applied. In fact, as regards language, customs, folklore, there is much less affinity between our Thonga,

ed into two halves: one for agricultural labour, the other for the military plundering raids organised by the Ngoni kings. Foreign elements increase in number and power. The Asiatic and Portuguese influences begin to work. A considerable Native trade develops in Lourenço Marques. The Ronga clans dwelling near the town acquire more influence. This leads us to the present time which I need not characterise more fully.

In 1910, we see European civilisation invading the whole territory of the tribe, by leaps and bounds, and the changes, which have been slow in previous decades, becoming rapid and profound. The tribe loses more and more its coherence; the authority of the Chief decreases and that of the White Commissioner increases. Taboos, ancestor-gods are no longer much believed in; Islam makes some recruits, owing to intermarriage, and Christianity pushes forward its Missions. The few indications given in that part of the table show the tendency of the evolution at the present time.

This sketch of the development of the tribe — a sketch which is drawn, I repeat, under all reserve, — does not confirm the opinion generally held in former times regarding black tribes, i. e., that they are in a state of utter degeneracy. On the contrary, *a slow progress* can be noticed, generally due to outside influences, notwithstanding the fact of long industrial stagnation; this progress has been so marked in agriculture, in the family and in the social system, that one can no more designate the Bantu as absolute Primitives. They would be more fitly called Semi-Primitives. On the other hand there seems to have been an almost complete *immobility* in the religious domain, even a degeneration, if the old monotheistic notion has really lost its precision in the last century. Folklore has been enriched, but, as a whole, the psychic life has evolved very little. Of course I do not mention the quite modern changes brought about by missionary enterprise and Islam propaganda.

the Tonga of Inhambane and the Tonga of Zambezi than between them and the Zulus.

We must be content to remain ignorant of facts on which there exist no reliable record.

II. *How can the South African Tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by the XX^th Century Civilisation?*

There have been more changes in the South African tribe during the last fifty years than during the fifty or five hundred preceding centuries, and this process of transformation is bound to continue at a geometrical rate of progression, during the fifty ensuing years. Taking into consideration for a moment the real and permanent interest of the Native, let us ask to what probable goal this transformation is leading him. I leave on one side, for the present, the influence of missionary enterprise.

Civilisation has certainly brought some *blessings* to the tribe and I have impartially and carefully noted them. Disappearance of deadly famines, owing to the development of trade ; better clothing (this is a mixed blessing) ; better seeds and agricultural implements (plough) ; possibility of earning money ; incentive to work in order to pay taxes ; (this Natives would certainly not call a blessing !); decrease of polygamy ; broadening of ideas, consequent on travelling and work in towns.

But the *curses* of civilisation far exceed its blessings for the South African Native : he has lost more through it than he has gained. Loss of political interest and responsibility (I. p. 461) ; loss of hierarchic respect for the chiefs and for the elder brothers ; loss of personal dignity ; moreover we notice decrease of religious faith and of respect for taboos.

In addition, the vices of Civilisation have found a deplorable welcome on the part of these Primitives : alcoholism of a degraded type (on the Coast), onanism, sodomy (in the Compounds), looseness of morals, — and these have caused new and very dangerous diseases which are now quickly spreading amongst them : alcoholic cachexy, syphilis, a great increase of consumption, due to the work in towns, without speaking of the criminal instincts which have developed under these influences (I. p. 46), murder, and rape (hence the Black peril, which was unknown in the primitive state). The tribe has lost its orientation, and moral and physical results have quickly followed.

To fight against these new and frightful foes the Black race happily possesses a considerable physical strength, and a great prolificacy. But

these may not necessarily last for ever. They can be lost. We see the Mpongwe tribe, in the French Congo, after a longer contact with debasing White influences, fast disappearing : the birth-rate is reduced to almost nothing and this formerly large tribe will probably have died out in the course of one or two generations.

I cannot conceal the fact that I consider the situation of the South African tribe, under present circumstances a very serious one. If these influences are not checked, I believe in the possible extinction of the race, in the long run, and I think every thoughtful observer will come to the same conclusion (1). Ought not certain steps to be taken by the Government in order to stop the progress of the evil ? Would not for instance, a policy of segregation be commendable ? Or, would it not be in the interest of the Natives to remove them to tropical Africa, leaving the White man alone in South Africa ? These questions have been discussed at length in South African papers, and I have nothing to say about them except that such steps seem to be absolutely impracticable. I am convinced that the only remedy for these deadly dangers is the formation, in the Black tribe, of a strong moral character accompanied by sufficient enlightment of mind to enable the Native himself to perceive the danger, and to overcome it.

* * *

Various ways have been proposed to reach this goal. Without speaking of the eugenistic attempt suggested by D. Kidd, in his Kafir Socialism, some have recommended what they call the *Gospel of Work*. Let the Natives be forced to work with their hands, and their character will soon improve ! There is much truth in this theory, and I believe regular manual work is a blessing for the Blacks as it is for any other race. Let us remark however that this "Gospel", is not always preached with the sole idea of benefitting the Black race. Moreover, should it even be possible to enforce labour on the South African Bantu, in this age of liberty, what would be the ultimate result ? Would it really transform them ? As soon as they could get rid of the obligation, they would run away and become worse than before. Labour is a

(1) These remarks apply to the Thonga tribe in a special way. The situation of the Zulu and Suto tribes is better, in as much as the sale of intoxicants is prohibited amongst them. However, many of the dangers here described threaten those tribes also.

great educator, provided the worker is in agreement with the law of labour, and this agreement can only be obtained when the heart of the savage is changed by a power of another kind.

* * *

In the conclusion of Volume I, I have myself advocated the grant of certain, after all very modest, political rights ; this proposal was not made with the intention of taking part in South African politics (which I am quite willing to leave to those whose duty it is to attend to them), but as a means of protecting the Native mind against degeneration, and I believe such a provision may help to form the character of the race, as no human being can make any real moral progress if he has no responsibility. However, neither would this be sufficient, and the lowering of character, wrought by the actual influences, would even make an enfranchisement of the Natives dangerous.

* * *

My conclusion is that the only salvation for the South African tribe is in a regeneration achieved by Christianity, Education providing, at the same time, the enlightenment of the mind which also is of primary necessity. My readers will do me the justice to acknowledge that I have not too often alluded to the great work of Christianisation in which I am engaged. Hovewer I am missionary. As such, I have a faith and I entertain a hope. May I be allowed to express it in a few words at the close of this study ?

I am convinced that Christianity is the only true solution of the problem : Christianity, not merely a new set of rites taking the place of the old animistic rites, but the *spiritual Christianity* which perfectly combines the religious belief and the moral duty, — accepted by the Bantu soul, — that soul which is eminently religious, and leading the weak and carnal Bantu savage to the height of the Christian ideal, thus victoriously replacing the non-moral religion and the non-religious morality of the Native.

Christianity, *the Religion of sanctity*, affording the only real satisfaction to the aspiration for purity so conspicuous in the Bantu rites. Science will soon dispel all the superstitious dread of the taboos. Let those imaginary fears be replaced by the fear of moral wrong, — sin becoming for the Christianised Native the real, the true taboo, — and a healthy life will then be possible.

Christianity, the Religion of conversion, *regeneration*, supernatural transformation, bringing within the reach of the Native a power from above to deliver him and to save him. Magical notions are doomed to die before long in the light of Science : the absurdity of the axioms of Dynamism will soon be perceived. But the faith in an all powerful Father will free the savage from the fear of spirits and open his heart to tbe holy influences of the Religion of Christ.

Christianity, *the Religion of love*, love between individuals, and love between the races, regulating the relations between Whites and Blacks, who are both indispensable to the cultivation, exploitation and full utilisation of the marvellous riches of South Africa, dispelling race hatred, and promoting the helpful collaboration of Africanders and Africans.

* * *

But is the Bantu capable of accepting such a high and spiritual religion ? I answer : " Yes ". Their intelligence can understand the Gospel of " the Father Who is in Heaven ", as they already possess the rudiments of this central teaching of Christianity in the beliefs of Ancestrolatry, and in their conceptions of Heaven. That their heart is able to grasp it by the faith — the only condition of entrance into the kingdom of God —is proved by a thousand instances. I fully recoggnise that many, perhaps most of the Christianised Natives, have not reached the heigths of moral and religious life, that their conduct is often in strange contrast with their profession. " Mission Kafirs " are not in very good repute. But I have seen many, in the modest circumstances of kraal life, who have been thoroughly transformed, women who have displayed wonderful qualities of sweetness and perseverance, and men whose character has become firm and strong, full of love and disinterestedness ; I know self-denying, consecrated, even pastoral souls amongst them, who are by no means inferior to European Christians, and, sometimes, I have had the vision of the South African tribe, less hampered by social and worldly circumstances than we are, transformed by the powerful spiritual influence of the Gospel of JesusChrist, approaching the Christian ideal as nearly, and perhaps nearer than we do ! This was a dream ; but the reality is that the Bantu soul can be regenerated as well as the European.

* * *

Let therefore all the friends of the South African tribe work for its salvation. This is a sacred duty : according to a great law of the moral world, if a superior race does not work for the moral betterment of the inferior, the inferior causes the superior to degenerate.

So let the Christian Church increase its Missions, the Government multiply the schools. Let the Native Commissioner, the mistress of the house, the storekeeper, the Compound Manager, instead of treating the Black man with contempt, remember that he is a moral being, and must become more and more so through their influence. Let the educated Natives also be aware of their immense responsibility towards their tribe in this respect. Native industry may disappear, the tribal life come to an end, the old restraints fall away : something better will take their places. Bantu collectivism is dying out. In its stead Christianity will promote a healthy and progressive Individualism and, under the new regime, the race will find its proper place in the South African Commonwealth. I do not see any other way in which it can escape destruction.

* * *

The Africander population, formed by the amalgamation of some of the best stocks of the Aryan race, certainly has a great future in store. May it be blessed on the sunny shores, and on the high lands of South Africa. May it enrich itself, and humanity, by bringing to light the marvellous mineral wealth, hidden in the rocks of this old country. But should the expansion of the Africander race be obtained at the cost of the ruin of the former occupants of the country, this would be an immense pity and an undeniable blemish. For, however bright the future of the Africanders may be, Africa would no longer be Africa, should there be no more Africans !

* * *

Gode save the Life of the South African Tribe !

APPENDIX I

The Chronology of Shinangana, a Thonga of Spelonken.

Speaking in 1905, he says:

Sixty-seven years ago, Shiluvane and the other Thonga chiefs fled before Manukosi (1838, or 1839?).

Three years later, battle with Matshekwane, Manukosi's general, who followed the Nkuna (1842).

In the sixteenth year of the era, battle of Gologodjwen, when the Nkuna chief, Shiluvane, fought against the Ba-Pedi of Sekukuni. (1855). In the nineteenth year, Manukosi dies (1858 or 1859?).

From there each year is known by its principal event:

Expedition of Shihahen (1859).

Beginning of the great war of succession between Manukosi's sons, Muzila and Mawewe. Muzila fled to Spelonken (1860).

Circumcision school at Mudjadji (1861).

We are plundered by Djiwawa (or Joao Albasini, the Portuguese commander who for many years was the chief of the Thonga refugees of Spelonken) (1862).

Djiwawa goes to fight against Mawewe (1863). (1)

We are plundered by the Swazi army (1864).

Shiluvane, the Nkuna chief, settles in the Nyarin country (1865).

Djiwawa kills Ribole and Magoro (1866).

The Modjadji army fights with the Nyari clan (1867).

The Swazis plunder Modjadji's country (Buluberi) (1868)

Djiwawa plunders the people of Mashao (Spelonken) (1869).

Muzila's army comes back from Mosapa (Gaza) and plunders Spelonken (Bvesha) (1870).

The Swazis plunder Makandju (1871).

Circumcision school of Madori in Spelonken (1872).

Daiman! (Opening of the Kimberley mines where Natives begin to go and work) (1873).

(1) According to Portuguese documents, this intervention of Muzila and Albasini took place in 1862, Mawewe having been definitely beaten on the 20th August, 1862.

Birth of my child Rihlangana. Death of Shiluvane (1874).

Famine of Magadingele (1875).

Death of Nkambi, son of Mhalamhala, a Khosa (1876).

War of Makhanana of the Loyi country. Refugees come to Spelonken (1877).

The Makandju people kill nwashitine of Rikotjo (1878).

Birth of my child Ntitiri (1879).

Circumcision school of Mayingwe (1880).

Djiwawa goes to catch Sekukuni (1881).

War between the Boers and the English (1882).

Year of the comet (1883). Djiwawa's son, Sambana, becomes chief. Sambana plunders the village of a Venda called Mbekwa (1884).

Phundjululu : the vermin destroys mealies (1885).

Circumcision school of Ñwamutjungu, a Hlanganu who had come from Spelonken (1886).

A Gwamba chief quarrels with Girifi. (Mr. Grieve, and old colonist of Spelonken) (1887).

Sambana beats a policeman (1888).

Death of Djiwawa (1889).

Sambana calls statute labourers (1890).

Death of Sambana (1891).

Circumcision school at Modjadji (1892).

My son Magondjwen starts for a journey (1893).

He comes back home (1894).

We are beaten by hail. Four people die (1895).

My son-in-law goes away (1896).

Epidemic among cattle. War of Makhube. We accompany the Boers (1897).

Matshona : Plague among oxen (1898).

Bahehemuki! The people of Gungunyana take refuge in Spelonken (after the war of Magigwana with the Portuguese) (1899).

The Boers attack Phefu, the Venda chief (1900).

The Whites fight. (Anglo-Boer war) (1901).

The English column chases the Boers away from Pietersburg Ñwashimbutane! The Son-of-the-Kid! (General Beyers compared with a kid on acount of his swift movements through the country during the guerilla war, (1902).

Mugayo! Ndlala! The mealie flour bought from the Whites on account of the famine! (1903).

Of course many of these dates are doubtful... Many are of a very

small importance ; it seems childish indeed to keep as the only remembrance of the year 1888 the fact that Sambana, Albasini's son, had beaten a policeman. But this shows however the historical sense of Shinangana ; he wanted to keep that uneventful year in his chronicle, and he chose the most noteworthy fact that had happened, though it was, indeed, no great event! So he attained his object which was to preserve a full record of all the years from 1858 to 1903, and he certainly succeeded. The chronology of Shinangana is a real feat of memory and, as he remained free of any civilised influence whatever, this feat must be considered when dealing with phenomena of oral tradition amongst savages.

APPENDIX II

List of botanic Thonga names with their scientific equivalents.

According to the publication of Hans Schinz and Henri-A. Junod :
"Zur Kenntnis der Pflanzenwelt der Delago-Bay."

"Bulletin de l'Herbier Boissier", Tome VII, N° 11, 1899.

Pteridophyta.	Tsuna.	Acrostichum tenuifolium (and other ferns)
Typhaceae.	Papala.	Typha australis (Used to make mats).
Pandanoceae.	Shihlowa.	Pandanus.
Aponogetonaceae.	Fenyana	Aponogeton spathaceus (1).
Hydrocharitaceae.	Nkushe.	Lagarosiphon muscoides (2).
Gramina.	Luhlwa.	Imperata cylindrica (Used as thatch).
»	Byanyi.	Andropogon (and all the other grass).
»	Litlange.	Cynodon dactylon.
Cyperaceae.	Nhlale.	Cyperus flabelliformis.
»	Bungu.	Cyperus prolifer (?) (Papyrus).
Commelinaceae.	Nkompfana.	Commelina africana, Forskalei, etc.
Liliaceae.	Goñhwa.	Crinum Forbesii, etc.
Orchidaceae.	Shishengane.	Eulophia papillosa.
Olacaceae.	Psautemu.	Opilia tomentella (3).
Amarantaceae.	Shinghalafumane.	Hermbstaedtia elegans.
»	Tlabatlabane.	Cyphocarpa Zeyheri (4).
Nympheaceae.	Tibu.	Nymphaea coerulea (Bulb edible).
Menispermaceae.	Shimbyati.	Cissampelos Pareira (5).
»	Shihumbula.	Synclisia Junodi.
Anonaceae.	Ntiti.	Artabotrys brachypetala.
»	Shintitana.	Artabotrys Monteiröae.
Leguminosae.	Gowana.	Albizzia fastigiata.
»	Khawa.	Accacia kraussiana.
»	Ndjiba.	Apalatoa delagoensis.
»	Ntjenge.	Dichrostachys nutans.
»	Nembe-nembe.	Cassia petersiana.
»	Hlapfuta (Ro)	Afzelia Cuanzensis
»	Shene (Dj).	» » (6).
»	Shirimbyati sha mutju.	Indigofera podophylla.
»	Shiringeti sha tchune.	Indigofera sp ?
»	Lisekaseka.	Sesbania aculeata.
»	Shekane.	Desmodium incanum.
»	Ñwamahlanga	Canavalia obtusifolia.
»	Rongolo ra nhlohe.	Eriosema cajanoides (The white Rongolo).
Meliaceae.	Nyamari.	Ekebergia Meyeri.
Euphorbiaceae.	Midyanhwari.	Fluggea obovata.
»	Shinyandjana.	Phyllantus pentandrus.
Anacardiaceae.	Nkanye.	Sclerocarya caffra (King of trees !) (p. 17)
Hippocrateaceae.	Shikokombela.	Hippocratea sp.
»	Mphyinsha.	Salacia Kraussii (Fruit edible).
Sapindaceae.	Buputwane	Cardiospermum halicacabum.
Malvaceae.	Ntjinsi	Hibiscus surattensis, Trionum, etc.
»	Shintjinosana.	Sida cordifolia.
»	Bushale.	Gossypium herbaceum (Cotton).

Sterculiaceae.	Muhlwadambu.	Melhania Forbesii.
»	Nkondlwahari.	Waltheria americana.
Ochnaceae.	Kelekele.	Ochna arborea.
Flacourtiaceae.	Psekamafura.	Casearia Junodii (Schinz).
»	Nhlungunu	Flacourtia Ramontoli.
Passifloraceae.	Menyamamba.	Modecca Kirkii.
Thymeleaeaceae.	Shindjibane.	Synaptolepis Oliveriana.
Combretaceae.	Balekanhloko.	Combretum Gueinzii.
»	Nkonono.	Terminalia sericea (Used for handles, etc.).
Ebenaceae.	Nhlangulane.	Euclea natalensis.
»	Shirole.	Royena pentandra.
Sapotaceae.	Ndjole.	Mimusops caffra (Fruit edible).
Loganiaceae.	Nsala.	Strychnos spinosa (p. 16).
»	Nkwakwa.	Strychnos Ungasha (p. 17).
Apocynaceae.	Nulu.	Carissa Arduina.
»	Ntamunga.	Carissa sp. (Fruit edible).
»	Mbungu.	Landolphia Kirkii (7).
»	Nkahlu.	Tabaernaemontana ventricosa (Styptic).
»	Nkahlu-tjhobo.	Vocanga Dregei.
»	Ntjulu.	Strophantus Petersianus.
Asclepiadaceae.	Muhlu-tjhobo.	Secamone sp.
»	Ndjutlwane.	Sarcostoma viminale.
Convolvulaceae.	Nkaka-wa-tjhobo.	Ipomoea cairica.
»	Masinga.	Stictocardia Woodii.
Scrophulariaceae.	Shitsinyambita.	Striga orobanchoïdes.
»	Murilwane (Dj).	Striga lutea.
Solanaceae.	Rulane.	Solanum sp.
»	Mondjo.	Datura fastuosa (?) (8).
Bignoniaceae.	Mpfungura.	Kigelia aethiopica.
Pedaliaceae.	Hlehlwa.	Pretrea Forbesii.
Lentibulariaceae.	Nkushe.	Utricularia stellaris.
Rubiaceae.	Ngalangala.	Tricalysia Kraussiana.
Cucurbitaceae.	Nkaka.	Momordica Balsamina (Edible).
»	Shirakarana	Citrullus Naudinianus.
»	Nkaka wa Batshopi.	Coccinia jatrophaefolia (Eaten by Chopis).
Campanulaceae.	Shihlangwana.	Wahlenbergia arenaria.
»	Shilawana	Lobelia chilawana.
Compositae.	Ntshontshongori.	Vernonia Cinerea.
»	Nkukula-shibuya.	» Perotteti.
»	Hlunguhlungu.	» tigna.
»	Shifodyana.	Ageratum conyzoides.
»	Kamele.	Mikania scandens (Medicinal).
»	Shirimbyati sha tchune.	Gnaphalium stenophyllum.
»	Shirimbyati.	Helichrysum parviflorum.
»	Mushidji.	Bidens africana.
»	Nhlangula-batjongwana.	Helichrysum damarense.

This list might be very much lengthened by any one devoting more time to the study of Thonga botany. Though it is not complete, I publish it, knowing by experience how difficult accurate botanic determinations are in the South African flora. It may be used as a starting point.

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(1) Dancers make crowns of it. (2) All the algae and generally plants growing in water are called Nkushe. (3) Banyans are said to use it to wash their teeth. (4) Used for rheumatism. (5) Medicine for bowel complaint. (6) Used to manufacture canoes. (7) India-rubber. Kafir orange. p. 19. (8) This plant, used as a divinatory means, is a Datura, subspontaneous or cultivated in various spots. I cannot guarantee the name of the species (p. 483).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OF VOLUME II

FOURTH PART

THE AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE.

Page

FIRST CHAPTER. The Agricultural Life 1
A. The soil and the Native system of landtenure 1
I. Nature of the soil 1
II. Native system of landtenure 5
B. Products of the soil 9
I. Cereals 9
II. Vegetables 11
III. Trees and fruits. 15
C. Agricultural customs. 20
I. The agricultural year 20
II. The agricultural taboos 28
D. Preparation of the food and drink 32
I. Fire and salt 32
II. Food 35
III. Drink 37
Alcoholism and the South African tribe 45
E. Live stock Breeding 48
I. Oxen 48
II. Other domestic animals 51
F. Hunting and Fishing 54
I. Big game hunting 54
II. Psinyama-nyamana. Small meats 64
III. Fishing 68
SECOND CHAPTER. The Industry of the Thonga 75
A. Clothing and Ornaments 75
I. The Evolution of Costume 75
II. Ornaments 82
B. Habitation. The Hut 87
C. Utensils 95

Page

I. Pottery 96
II. Basket work 102
III. Wood carving 112
IV. Metallurgy 120
D. Commerce 122
E. General Observations on Native Industry 132

FIFTH PART

The literary and artistic life.

First chapter. Characteristics of the Bantu Intellect . . . 137
A. The Noun and the Power of Classification 138
B. The Verb and the Power of Combination 141
C. The Syntax and the Power of Co-ordination 142
D. The Adverbs and the Power of Description 142
E. The Numerals and the lack of Arithmetical sense . . . 148
F. The Literary sense of the Thonga 153
Second chapter. The Thonga Folklore 157
A. Proverbial sayings and enigmas 157
I. Proverbs 158
II. Riddles 160
B. Songs 167
I. Thonga Poetry and Thonga Poets 167
II. Lyric Poetry 170
III. Epic poetry 175
IV. Satiric Poetry 177
V. Dramatic Poetry 181
VI. Action Songs 188
VII. Incantations 189
VIII. Songs accompanying tales and games 190
C. Folk-Tales 191
I. The place of folktales in the Life of the Tribe . . 191
II. Classification of the tales. Their literary value . . 193
III. The ethnographic value of the tales 196
IV. The Moral and Philosophical value of the tales . . 203
V. The Animal Folklore 206
1) Ñwashisana, the Wily Trickster 206
2) The Hare and the Lion 213
3) The Hare and the Baboon 217
4) The Hare's Hoe 223

Page

VI. The Wisdom of the little ones 228
The disobedient Child and the Big snake . . . 229
VII. The Ogre tales. Scaly Heart 231
VIII. Moral tales. Zili 241
IX. Tales founded on real facts 244
1) The Child that was carried away by a Baboon . 244
2) Those who laugh but once 247
X. Foreign tales 248
Third chapter. Music 249
A. Musical Instruments 249
1) Wind Instruments 249
2) Stringed Instruments 252
3) The Timbila of the Thonga xylophone . . . 252
B. A collection of forty Thonga tunes 255
C. The musical system of the Thonga 265
Conclusion on Part V. The problem of Native Education . . 269
1) The necessity of a special Native curriculum . . 269
2) The place of the Vernacular in Native Education. 271
3) The want of the arithmetical sense 276
4) Seven principles of Native Education 276

SIXTH PART

The religious life and superstitions.

Chapter I. Conceptions of the Thonga regarding Nature and Man 279
A. Conceptions regarding Nature 279
I. Origin of the World 279
II. The celestial World 280
III. Cosmographic and Meteorological phenomena . . 288
1) The Wind 288
2) Native Geography 288
3) Earthquakes and Rainbow 289
4) Lightning 290
5) The problem of Rain and the way the Thonga deal with it 292
a) The causes which prevent rainfall and the rites by which they are removed . . . 293
b) Rain Charms 297

Page

IV. The Inorganic World 301
V. The Vegetable World 305
VI. The Animal World. 311
B. Conceptions regarding Man 325
I. The origin of Man 325
1) The creation of Man. 326
2) The cause of Death 328
II. The various Human Races 329
III. The Human Body 332
1) Ideas of Anatomy 332
2) Physiological Notions 333
IV. The Human Soul 338
Conclusion on Chapter I. Classification of Thonga conceptions regarding Nature and Man 342
1) Individual Ideas 343
2) Collective beliefs. 344
Second chapter. The Religion 346
A. Ancestrolatry 347
I. The Ancestor-gods 347
1) The name of the Ancestor-gods 347
2) The categories of Ancestor-gods 348
3) The Sacred Woods 351
4) Relation of the Ancestor-gods with their descendants 358
II. Means of propitiation. Offerings and Sacrifices. . 361
1) Classification of offerings 362
a) The Family offerings 362
b) The National offerings 371
2) The main elements of the Ancestral Worship . 375
a) The Priesthood 376
b) The Conception of Offerings. 377
c) The Prayer. 383
d) The Divine Nature of the Ancestor-gods . 385
III. General Characteristics of Ancestrolatry 388
B. The Conception of Heaven 389
I. The Definition of Heaven 390
II. Customs connected with the Conception of Heaven 394
1) Heaven, Twins and Rain 394
2) Heaven and the Nunu 401

Page

3) Heaven, Storms and Robbers 403
4) Heaven and the Balungwana 405
C. Concluding Remarks on the Thonga Religion 406
I. The Origin of the Conception of Heaven. . . . 406
II. The Antiquity of Ancestrolatry 408
III. The relation between Ancestrolatry and the Conception of Heaven 409
THIRD CHAPTER. Magic 412
A. Medical Art 413
I. The Medicine-men 414
II. Medical practices 418
III. Conception of Disease 430
B. Possessions 435
I. The Spirits which causes the disease 436
II. Beginning and Diagnosis of the disease 437
III. The treatment of Possessions, or Exorcism . . . 439
1) The Drum performance. 439
2) The rite of the Gobo basin 445
3) The appeasement by blood 446
4) The final purification of hondlola 449
IV. The new condition of the Exorcised 451
1) Protective rites 451
2) Propitiatory rites 453
3) Development of subliminal faculties 455
4) The society of the exorcised. 456
5) Funeral rites of the exorcised 458
6) Conclusion on Possessions 459
C. Witchcraft. 460
I. Black Magic (Buloyi) 461
1) The Baloyi 461
2) The Crimes of the Baloyi 465
II. White Magic and Magicians 471
1) Difference between Magicians and Wizards . . 471
2) Various categories of Magicians 473
3) Some Thonga Magicians 473
III. The way of dealing with Wizards 476
1) Protective means 478
2) Means of disclosing Baloyi 479
a) The Enchanted Horn. 479
b) The Enchanted Flute 480

Page

c) The rera nyiwa 480
d) The "smelling out" procedure 481
e) The Mondjo ordeal 483
3) The punishment of Witchcraft 486
IV. Concluding remarks on Witchcraft 487
D. Divination 488
I. Presages. 489
II. Less important means of Divination 490
III. The Hakati 491
IV. The Divinatory Bones 493
1) The objects composing the set of Divinatory Bones 495
2) The rules of interpretation 501
3) Some cases of astragalomancy 506
a) The case of the sick mother 507
b) The battle of Moudi 508
c) The prophecy of a migration. 512
4) The initiation of the Diviners 515
5) The importance of the Divinatory bones . . . 519
Fourth chapter. Taboo and Morality 524
A. The Taboo 524
I. Classification of Taboos 525
II. Some remarks about the taboos 528
B. Moral Restraints 530
C. Relation between Taboo, Sacredness and Morality . . 533
Conclusion 534
I. How far can the actual South African Bantu be called Primitives? 534
II. How can the South African Tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by the XXth Century Civilisation? 540
Appendix I. The Chronology of Shinangana 544
» II. List of botanic Thonga names with their scientific equivalents 548
Table of contents 551
List of illustrations. 557
General alphabetic Index and Glossary of Native terms. . . . . .

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Page

The pond in the hollow 2
Mimale palm-trees near Lourenço Marques 5
The nsala tree 16
Tilling the fields near Makulane 21
The storehouses of Sokis 27
Dula storehuts in the Shiluvane village 28
Native salt manufacture 34
Milala palm-trees 41
Collecting the palm wine 42
Sugar cane press 44
Buffalo hunter with his victim 63
The tjeba fishing 71
Camilla, a Lourenço Marques woman 76
Christian girls of the Training Institution of Lemana . . . 77
Zulu costume 79
Ornaments, calabashes, pottery 85
Construction of the Thonga roof 90
Door of a Ronga hut 92
The Thonga hut 93
The Native tin town near Pretoria Station 94
Fashioning the pots 96
Constructing the furnace 97
The furnace ready 98
Result of the firing 99
Pots used to draw water 100
A young Spelonken artist and his work 101
Ngula 104
Manufacturing a ngula in Spelonken 105
Thonga basket work 107

Page

Carrying lihlelo baskets, ètc. 108
Thonga carvings. 111
Carved spoon from Maputju country 113
Carved chain and bowl 114
Thonga kitchen ware 115
Mankhelu's stick 117
Thonga statuettes 118
A panther devouring an Englishman 119
Thonga canoe 120
Native ironfoundry in Zoutpansberg 123
Manual work at the Lemana Training School 133
A Thonga minstrel 168
The Ronga dance 183
Martha, a Ronga story-teller 192
Women in Muhlaba's old village 250
A guba player 252
The timbila and its ten notes 253
The flute of Heaven 291
Sokis mug, the altar of primitive mankind 363
Thonga pharmacopoeia 420
Fowa and timfisa, medico-magical amulets 428
Protective amulets worn by exorcised 452
A Ronga gobela 477
The Hakati 492
Some of Mankhelu's divinatory bones 497
Consulting the bones 502
Mankhelu imitating the "ntjumba" position 503
Mankhelu imitating the "minkono" position 504
The case of the sick mother 509
The battle of Moudi 511
Prophecy of a migration 513

ERRATUM

P. 189. Four lines from the bottom, read 31 instead of 36.
P. 189. Two » » » » » 30 » » 35.
P. 190. Eight » » the top » 32 » » 37.

General alphabetical Index

and

Glossary of the Native terms most frequently used in Vol. I & II

Abrus, I. 292
Absents, I. 135, 146, 165
Abstract ideas, II. 140, 145
Adultery, I. 39, 192, 414; II. 483
Adverbs, II. 142, 143
Afterbirth, see Placenta
Aggregation rites, I. 56, 89, 123, 168, 458; II. 334
Agriculture, I. 307; II. 1, 31
Albasini, I. 27
Alcoholism, I. 412; II. 45, 459
All-Father, II. 390, 407, 534
Altar, I. 283, 293, 310; II. 42, 362, 450, 454, 518
Amber, II. 125
Amulets, I. 455; II. 368, 381, 420, 429, 479
Anatomy, II. 332
Ancestor-gods, I. 166; II. 293, 344, 347 & sq., 436, 499
Ancestral worship, I. 256; II. 303, 388 & sq., 436, 499, 534
Andrade (A. Freire d'), I. 446, 483; II. 274
Animals, II. 311, 463
Animatism, II. 303, 342
Animism, II. 342 & sq., 388, 487
Ant-bear, II. 320, 498
Antelopes, I. 184, 239, 378, 404; II. 54, 58, 375, 496
Anthropophagy, I. 442, 452; II. 462, 487
Ants, II. 65, 91
Army, I. 344 371, 423—458
Ash-heap, I. 49, 51, 192, 282
Assagai, I. 217, 426; II 122, 128
Assembly, II. 480, 484
Astragalomancy, II. 494
Astragalus bone, I. 162; II. 52, 350, 376, 448, 453, 522
Australians, I. 251

Baboon, II. 217, 244, 498
Bachelor, I 125
Bakhili, married people
Balemba, I. 72, 93; II, 122
Baloyi clan, I. 21
Baloyi, wizards. Pl. of *noyi*
Balungu. White people
Bana, children. Pl. of Ñwoana
Bananas, II. 29, 129

Band, I. 404; II. 251, 265
Ba-Ndjao, II. 436
Bandla, place where men sit together in the village
Ba-Ngoni, I. 27, 343
Ba-Nyai, I. 22; II. 72, 367, 372
Ba-Pedi. See Pedi
Baptism, I. 60, 94
Ba-Ronga, I. 2, 180, 470
Baskets, I. 259, 286, 308; II. 26, 36, 102
Ba-Suto, II. 348, 522
Basutoland, I. 464; II. 159
Battalion, I. 431, 444
Battle. I. 444, 485
Batukulu, pl. of *ntukulu*, uterine nephew
Bayete, I 346
Beads, I. 49, 259; II. 86, 130, 437
Beauty, I. 183
Bee, I. 361; II, 314, 489
Beer, I. 118, 310; II. 219, 364, 369, 523
Beetles, I. 61, 68; II. 65, 66, 313, 401, 468, 489
Belching, II. 337
Beliefs, II. 343
Bending (of the limbs), I. 134; II. 408
Betrothal, I. 102, 114, 116
Bila group, I. 17, 470
Bile-bladder, II. 52, 447
Billiards, I. 70
Birds, II. 24, 128, 129, 290, 318
Birth, I, 35 & 39
Biyeketa, medical practice, I. 52
Black, I. 454, 458, 514
Blood, I. 185, 198; II. 73. 333, 337, 380, 446, 467; relationship. I. 221 & sq.
Blows, I. 80, 415
Boa, II. 66
Boats, II. 110, 120
Boha, to tie
Bone, I. 167; II. 332, 381, 448, 495
Borrowing, I. 411
Botany, II. 305 & sq.
Boundary, II. 9
Bowl, II. 113
Bracelet, II. 84, 368, 515
Breasts, I. 188, 191
Broken pot (rite of), I. 42
Broom, II. 110
Brother, I. 217
Bryce. Hon James, I. 1
Buffalo, I. 378, 459
Bugango, sexual relations of boys and girls
Bugimamusi, extremity of the earth. II. 68, 281
Buhosi, chieftainship
Bukanye, beer made of the fruit of nkanye trees
Bukonwana, relations with, village of, relatives-in-law
Bukosi wealth
Buloyi, witchcraft
Bunanga, band
Buñanga, medico-magical art
Burial, I. 137; II. 297, 349
Buta, to woo
Butterfly, I. 419; II. 313
Buwumba, state of destitution, I. 45, 191; II. 514
Byala, beer

Calabash, I. 48; II. 116, 415, 439
Callaway (Rev), II 202

Capital, I. 390 & sq.
Carving, II. 112 & sq.
Caterpillar, II. 64, 313
Cautery, II. 427
Cereals, II. 9 & sq.
Chain, II. 113
Chameleon, I. 92; II. 189, 328
Charms, I. 360, 362, 365, 420, 451; II. 452, 461, 474
Chest, II. 338, 504
Chief, I. 341—390, 460, 465
Childhood, I. 61 & sq.
Chopi tribe. I. 15, 33, 179; II. 78
Christianity, I. 124, 169; II. 410, 460, 488
Chronology, II. 151
Circle, I. 126, 281, 345; II. 98
Circumcision, I. 71, 76, 179; II. 470
Civil cases, I. 412
Civilisation, I. 11, 131, 157, 327; II. 74, 81, 95, 129, 132, 356
Claims, I. 302
Clan (Constitution of), I. 329
Clans (Thonga), I. 13, 344
Clay, I. 42, 80; II. 4, 91, 96
Clicks, I. 29
Club, I. 426
Colenso (Bishop), I. 277
Colic, II. 420, 431
Collectivism, I. 124, 167; II. 202
Colours, II. 266
Comedy, II. 184
Comet, II. 287
Communism, I. 288, 326
Comparisons, II. 154, 164
Concubine, I. 324
Confinement, I. 40, 190
Consanguine marriages, I. 242
Conscience, I. 442; II. 155, 338, 522, 532.
Consumption, II. 423, 434
Contagion, II. 94, 433, 444
Convulsions, I. 43, 46; II. 392, 424
Copper, I. 359; II. 122
Coronation, I. 344
Costume, II. 74, 82
Cotton string, I. 54, 151
Counsellors, I. 344, 394
Counting, II. 148
Court, I. 391 & sq.
Crab, I. 175; II. 171, 189, 257
Cremation, II. 297
Criminal cases, I. 414; II. 486
Crocodile, I. 86, 365, 379; II. 317, 468, 500
Crown (of the headmen), I. 129; of the hut, I. 144; II. 90, 92, 466
Crystal, II. 304
Culinary art, II. 35
Cupping, II. 425
Cuscuta, II. 489

Dagger, I. 427
Dance, I. 43, 90, 111, 346, 437; II. 181, 454, 482, 484
Daughter, I. 217
Day, II. 150, 283
Death, I. 132, 211; II. 328, 335, 341, 392, 394;
cause of, II. 392, 394;
of a chief, I. 387;
of circumcised, I. 84;
penalty, I. 417
Debts, I. 133, 266, 302, 309, 410
Decency (feeling of), II. 530

Defilement, I. 137, 143, 153, 167, 189, 210, 458; II. 61, 300, 396, 416, 426
Delirium, II. 424
Demoniacs, II. 459
Destitution (state of), I. 45, 190; II. 514
Dialects, I. 28, 468
Diaphragm, II. 62, 338
Disclosing wizards, II. 385
Discussions, I. 301, 309, 349, 408; II. 153, 159, 462
Disease, II. 430 & sq.
Disgust, II. 66, 533
Dish, II. 114
Distribution (of meat), I. 299
Divination, I. 417; II. 305, 488 & sq.
Divinatory bones, I. 204, 290, 293; II. 360, 433, 440, 479, 493 & sq.
Divinity, II. 385
Divorce, I. 195, 413
Djonga (group), I. 16, 470
Dlaya shilongo, rite of "Killing" blood relationship, I. 243
Dog, II. 59
Doll, I 173
Door, II. 91
Dramatic poetry, II. 181
Drawing lots, II. 490
Dreams, I. 94; II. 341, 359, 364, 377, 438
Drink, I. 189, 465; II. 37
Drugs, II. 415, 425
Drum, I. 403; II. 439
Dualism, II, 459, 487
Dung, II. 37, see Psanyi
Duty, II. 530
Duyker, I. 45, 336; II. 39, 206, 468
Dynamism, II. 342, 405, 521
Dysentery, II. 420
Dwarf, I. 402; II. 405

Ear, I. 95; II. 266
Earth, I. 47, 377; II. 305, 350, 378, 422
Earthquakes, II. 289
Ecstasy, II. 482, 490
Education, I. 93; II. 152, 269
Egg, I. 185; II. 53
Egyptian customs, II. 78, 117
Eland, I. 378; II. 57.
Elephant, I. 82, 150, 360, 378, 444; II. 59, 128, 176
Emetic, I. 442
Endogamy, I. 240
Enigmas, II. 157 & sq.
Epic poetry, II. 175
Evolution, II. 132, 278, 536
Exogamy, I. 240
Exorcism, II. 190, 262, 283
Eye, II. 266

Family system, I. 299 & sq.
» council, I. 303
Famine, II. 73
Fasting, I. 124
Father, I. 217; II. 349
Favourites, I. 342, 396
Feminine prefix, I. 475
» suffix, I. 35
» taboos, I. 184
Fence, I. 281, 291, 297; II. 466
Fine, I. 194, 213, 379, 413, 415. 445; II. 458
Fire, I. 23, 135, 166, 364; II. 32, 303, 327, 351
First use, II. 100; II. 527
Fish, I. 107; II. 316, 331

Fishing, I. 308; II. 68, 300
Flagellation, I. 75; II. 400
Flint, II. 33, 299
Flour, II. 36
Flute, II. 249, 265, 291, 480
Foam, II. 439, 449, 456
Folklore, I. 338; II. 191 & sq., 532
Folk tales, II. 191—248, 398
Fontanelle, I. 47; II. 398
Food, I. 150 & sq.
Foreign tales, II. 248
Forge, II. 121
Forked pole, I. 5, 361; II. 358, 362, 378, 450, 518
Formulae of circumcision, I. 85
» of heralds, I. 432
» in prayers, II. 383
Fowls, I. 108, 185; II. 52, 323, 449, 515
Frazer J. G., I. 6
Frogs, II. 316
Fukwen, place behind the hut.
Fumigation, I. 42; II. 426
Funeral rites, I. 132—167; II. 350, 458
Future life, II. 343, 350 & sq., 391
Fuya, to possess.

Galagala, big Lizard, Gheko, I. 174; II. 316, 328
Gall bladder, see Bile bladder.
Games, I. 67, 172, 174, 309; II 150
Gandjelo, altar. See altar.
Gangisa, to court girls, I. 96, 144, 150, 156, 195, 342
Gardens, I. 147, 289; II. 15, 21
Gate, I. 282, 292, 293, 294, 392
Gaza, I. 19, 261, 271
Genealogies, I. 24, 218, 257
Genesis (African), II. 329
Gila, *giya*, war dance, I. 437
Giraffe, I. 378, 435
Girls, I. 170
Goat, I. 45, 61, 121, 158, 282; II. 91, 495
Gobela, exorciser, II. 439, 458, 473, 477
Godfather, I. 37
Godji, II. 121, 126
Gods, see Ancestor-gods
Government (White), I. 8, 93, 266, 276, 418, 459; II. 31, 413, 487
Grammar, I. 28, 220, 468; II. 138, 273, 321, 531
Grandfather, I. 222
Grandmother, I. 43
Grave, I. 136, 156, 388,
» diggers, I. 137, 151, 155, 163, 199, 458
Great *mukoñwana*, I. 231
Ground-nuts, I. 107, 367; II. 12
Group-marriage, I. 251
Groups (of clans), I. 14
Guba, war songs, I. 434
Guessing, I. 177, 319
Gungunyana, I. 27, 340, 380, 389, 447, 483; II. 443
Gwambe, I. 23; II. 193, 326, 330

Haematuria, II. 421
Hahla, Twin
Hahla or *phahla*, to sacrifice
Hail, II. 301
Hair, I. 50, 75, 91, 130, 145, 152, 176, 360, 421; II. 83, 338, 373

Hands, I. 135, 322, 356, prohibition of use of; II. 448, 517
Hare, I. 184; II. 198, 206 & sq
Harmony (System of), II. 268
Harp, II. 252
Harvest, II. 26
Hatred, II. 338, 487
Head, I. 137, 211, 272, 446
Headman, I. 103, 282, 289, 298, 326; II. 6
Heart, II. 338
Heaven, I. 205, 447; II. 280, 292, 345, 347, 390 & sq., 474
Hemp smoking, I. 311
Henhouse, I. 282, 393
Herald, I. 397
Hereditary functions, I. 361; II. 365, 375, 414
Herero, II. 400
Hiccough, II. 337, 438
Hierarchy, I. 71, 320, 376
Hippopotamus, I. 378; II. 60
History, I. 20, 72, 332, 384, 423; II. 53, 124, 151, 436
Hlabi clans, I. 17, 19
Hlamba, to wash away
Hlanganu group, I. 17, 470
Hlengwe group, I. 17, 470; II. 72, 279, 492
Hlonipha, see Respect, I 358
Hockey, I. 66
Hoe, I. 109, 155, 259; II. 20
Hondlola, rite of purification; I. 57, 101, 145; II. 427, 435, 449, 507, 516
Honey, I. 107, 239; II. 43, 319
Hoof, II. 448, 496
Hook, II. 68
Horn, I. 363, 376; II. 298, 448, 479
Hosana, sub. chief
Hosi, chief
Hospitality, I. 106, 322
Hubo, square place of the village
Hublu, mafureira almond
Humba, shell, snail
Hungula, vapour bath. I. 145; II. 422, 426
Hunting, I. 64, 88, 308, 378; II. 54, 492
Husband, I. 41, 217
Hut, I. 125, 136, 138, 164, 198, 213, 308, 325, 364; II. 95, construction of, II. 88, crushing of, I. 157
Hyena, II. 215, 324, 464, 468, 498
Hygiene, I. 60

Idleness, I. 326
Illegitimate (children), I. 38, 263
Immorality, I. 96
Immortality, I. 167
Imprecation, II. 370
Inauguration, I. 293; II. 69, 100
Incest, II. 60, 160
Incisions, I. 180, 198, 421, 454, 458; II 419
Individualism, I. 121, 124, 239, 266, 461; II. 205
Infancy, I. 35-60, 166; II. 348
Infinity, II. 385
Inheritance, I, 133, 141, 153, 200, 204, 208, 234, 248, 257, 480; II. 6
Inhalation, I. 150, 454; II. 456
Initiation, II. 36, 450, 472, 491, 493 515, 526
Inoculation, II. 42, 424
Insects, II. 311
Instruments (of music), II. 249 & sq.

Insults, I. 419; II. 384, 410
Iron, II. 120, 538
Ivory, II. 129

Jealousy, I. 213, 274, 343, 358, 448; II. 172
Johannesburg, I. 98, 261; II. 130, 170
  Compounds, II. 47, 540
Jumping, I. 440
Juncus, II. 56, 302
Justice of peace, I. 300
  sense of, I, 410

Kafir corn, I. 40, 368; II. 10
Kalanga, I. 22
Kanye, fruit of the Nkanye tree
Khana, kind of dance
Khehla, man with the wax crown
Khombo, misfortune
Kimao, II. 76
Kimberley, I. 261; II. 127
Kinship, I. 217
Kissing, I. 322
Kitchen, II. 272
Knobneusen, I. 179
Knot, I. 305
Knuckle bones, I. 175
Kokwana, grandfather; maternal uncle
Kunga rite. See Silence
Kwakwa, fruit of the Nkwakwa tree, I. 22, 367; II. 17

Lahla khombo. Rite of purification, I. 155, 201; II. 397
Lakes, II 302
Landtenure, II. 5
Language, I. 28, 80; II. 272
Language, of animals, II. 322
  » taboos, I. 80. 160; II. 76, 296, 528
Lao, hut of boys
Laudatory name, I. 333, 476
Law, I. 410; II. 532
Lebombo, I. 25; II. 351
  » hills, I. 23
Left side, I. 138, 297
Leopard, see Panther
Leprosy, I. 167, 478; II. 423, 434, 484
Libyan sheath, I. 95, 488; II. 78, 536
Lightning, I. 289; II. 290, 399, 403
Lily, I. 151
Lion, I. 335, 378; II. 57, 209, 213, 467, 498
Literary sense, II. 153
Liver, I. 245; II. 338
Living sacrifices, II. 357, 373, 378
Lobola, to acquire a wife, I. 102, 108, 117, 161, 194, 207, 242, 258, 343, 350, 389, 476, 480
Lobolo, sum given for the acquisition of a wife
Lochia, I. 41, 51, 60; II. 335
Locusts, II. 65, 73, 312, 405
Look behind, II. 357
Lourenço Marques; II. 124, 188
Louse, II. 57, 160, 313
Love, II. 163, 171
  » charms, I. 101, 184
Lovedale, II. 134
Loya, to bewitch. See Witchcraft
Luma, to remove by a rite the danger of a given food, I. 146, 360, 366; II. 62, 69, 369, 371, 416, 453

Lumula, to wean
Lunacy, II. 283
Lyric poetry, II. 170

Madness, II. 424, 435, 467
Mafureira tree, see Nkuhlu
Magic, II. 345, 405 & sq.
Magicians, II. 84, 324, 403, 413, 439, 451, 457, 460 & sq., 473
Magwamba, I. 18; II. 127, 327
Mahloko, fine to pay to a deceased wife's relatives, I. 211
Mahosi, behind the hut.
Maize, I. 378; II. 9, 36, 536
Majlangalen, I. 203; II. 45
Makwabu, brother or sister, I 217
Male, palm tree of the marsh
Malemba, see Balemba
Malopa, mourning dress
Malume, maternal uncle
Maluleke clan, I. 17; II. 279
Malumbi. II. 325
Manana, mamana, mother
Mankhelu, I. 5; II 415, 473, 494
Mantis. II. 312, 358
Manukosi, I. 27
Manure, II. 23
Manyisa, I. 19
Maputju, I. 19, 299, 436; II. 400
Marginal rites, I. 76, 92, 143, 160, 168, 178, 181, 298, 458; II. 336, 397, 435
Marret. R.R. II. 342
Marriage, I. 100, 183, 241—250, 343, 348
Marriage by abduction, I. 120, 477
Married people, I. 41, 79, 96, 97, 192; II. 335
Marshes, II. 22
Mat, I. 138, 140, 259; II. 109
Maternal uncle, I. 45, 164, 227, 253; II. 375
Mathwaza, exorcised, II. 447
Mati, water.
Matlulana, polyandry, I. 133, 137, 194, 479, 530
Mawewe, I. 27
Mbaya, mbayi see Libyan sheath, II. 78
Mbelele, rain rite, I. 189; II. 295, 395, 399
Mbonga, kind of bee. See Bee.
Mbongi, herald, I. 397
Mboza, I. 6; II. 438
Meals, I. 304; II. 36
Medicine, I. 46; II. 413—436
Medicine-men, I. 42, 133, 145, 291, 295; II. 306, 365, 413 & sq., 439, 473, 517
Memory, II. 151, 192, 275
Menses, I. 51, 178, 190, 489; II. 51, 335
Mhamba, offering, I. 142, 150, 365; II. 361, 373, 377 & sq., 454
Mhula, medicinal pill.
Mhunti, duyker antelope.
Mice, II. 64
Midwives, I. 35
Migrations, I. 21; II. 512
Mikulungwana, shouts of joy or sorrow, I. 147, 158, 202
Milala, pl. of nala. Palm tree leaves
Milebe, I. 183, 489. Labra minora
Milk, I. 45, 59, 190; II. 50, 423
Milombyana, drugs for infants, I. 46, 60, 170; II. 421
Minstrel, II. 167

Miscarriage, I. 189; II. 294
Missionary Conference, II. 271, 274, 342
Missions, I. 9, 93, 267, 278, 461; II. 47, 153, 488, 519
Miti, pl. of muti, village
Mobilisation, I. 430
Modelling, II. 102
Mole, II. 321, 420, 429
Mondjo, divinatory philter, II. 483, 490
Money, I. 208, 379
Monkeys, I. 185, 189; II. 425
Monogamy, I. 273, 364
Months, I. 51, 375; II. 21, 284, 518
Moon, I. 51; II. 29, 283, 397, 451, 453.
Morakwen, I. 19, 483; II. 289
Moral character, II. 386, 388, 541
Morality, II. 194, 203, 241, 530 & sq.
Mortar, II. 114
Moslems, II. 126
Moth, I. 61; II. 313
Mother, I. 224; II. 349
» adoptive, I. 179
Mother-in-law, I. 125, 172, 353
Mother-right, I. 253; II. 535
Mourning, I. 115, 144, 149, 158, 164, 202, 449; II. 398.
Mourning songs, I. 148; II. 177, 258, 293
Mourning attire, I. 146, 149, 191, 388
Mousterian, I. 134; II. 408, 535
Mubango, war of succession, I. 27
Mug, I. 140; II. 363
Mukhumbi, circle of warriors, I. 431
Mukoñwana, relative-in-law
Mulungu, white man, II. 330, 407
Murder, I. 415; II. 466
Music, I. 404; II. 249 & sq., 265, 442
Musinho d'Albuquerque, I. 483
Muti, Native village
Mutilations, I. 451
Mutshupu, totem, I. 335
Muzila, I. 27, 355, 358

Nails, I. 421; II. 373
Nala, palm tree of the tills
Name, I. 331, 474; II. 443
Naming, I. 37
Namu, younger sister of the wife, etc. I. 234
Nandja, subject
National medicine, I. 360
National Council, I. 466
Native Commissioners, I. 8, 269, 460
Natural feelings (want of), I. 132, 323
Naturalisation, I. 406
Nature, II. 161, 279
Nature spirits, II. 303
Ndjaka, inheritance, defilement of death
Ndjao, see Juncus
Ndlala, famine
Ndlopfu, elephant
Ndjuna, Counsellor
Necklace, I. 96, 144; II. 86, 474
Ngiyane, wax crown

Ngoma, circumcision customs. Law of secret societies
Ngongomela. Venus
Ngoni, see Zulu
Ngula, basket, II. 104
Nhanga, hut of girls
Nhungubane, calabash to preserve drugs
Nicknames, I. 475
Niece, I. 235
Nkanye, tree Sclerocarya caffra, II. 17
Nkosi, mourning
Nkuhlu, tree (mafureira)
Nkuna clan, I. 17, 23, 329, 384, 399, 436, 496
Nkwakwa, tree (Strychnos)
Nondwane, I. 23, 330, 380, 482; II. 5
Nouns, II. 138
Noyi, wizard, II. 461
Nsati, wife
Ntehe, skin to carry babies, I. 44, 166, 191, 480; II. 158
Ntimu, sacred wood
Ntjumi, go-between
Ntukulu, uterine nephew
Nubility, I. 177
Numerals, II. 148
Numzana, headman
Nunu, vermin of the fields
Nursing, I. 44, 49; II. 83
Nuru, spiritual principle which comes out from man and animal after death, I. 372, 453; II. 57, 62. 324, 344
Nwanati clan, I. 18, 22
Nyaka, black earth
Nyoka, snake, worm
Nyokwekulu, sacred medicine of Nondwane, I. 360
Ñanga, medicine-man
Ñwana, child
Ñwali, God of the Ba-Kalanga, II. 279, 326
Ñwalungu group, I. 17, 470
Ñwamantibyane, I. 432. 483, 486; II. 174, 257

Oath, II. 370
Oblivion, II, 55
Obscenity, I. 79, 83. 160, 178, 291, 488; II. 296, 402
Ochre, I. 44, 170; II. 83, 458, 472
Offerings, II. 362 & sq., 377 & sq.
Ogres, I. 69; II. 194, 231 & sq., 263
Oil tin. I. 210
Old age, I. 131, 173. 210
Omnipotence, II. 386
Omnipresence, II. 328, 386
Omniscience, II. 328, 386
Open, II. 469
Oral tradition, II. 199
Ordeal, I. 417
Orientation (sense of), II. 149
Origin of language; II, 147
» of man, II. 325
» of tales, II. 196
» of the world, II. 279
Ornaments, II. 82, 103, 112, 471
Owl, I. 175; II. 189, 262, 468
Ox, I. 118, 185, 238, 259, 337, 414; II. 48, 189, 496
Oxen Kraal, I. 282

Palm trees, II. 3, 41, 61, 91. 102, 110

Palm wine, II. 41
» leaves, II. 104, 128. 167, 439
Panics, I. 448
Panther, I. 378; II. 119, 470, 498
Parafin, I. 76
Parasite, II. 307, 311, 421
Parturition, I. 190
Passage rites, I. 74, 76, 122, 167, 297, 376, 457; II. 300, 398, 435, 446
Password, I. 449
Pea, II. 12
Pedi, I. 71, 98, 243, 251, 321, 335, 366, 400, 484, 489; II. 13, 64, 300, 496, 522
Peg. I. 363
Phamba, to speak in a roundabout way
Phokolo, sacrifice for rain, II. 372
Phonetic permutation, I. 470
Photography, II. 340
Phungulu, see Hungula
Physiology, II. 333
Piety, II. 365, 379, 382, 389
Pig, I. 152, 285; II. 52, 377
» wild, II. 470, 498
Pigeon, I. 189, 323
Pillow. II. 116
Pine-apple, II. 14
Pipe, I. 145, 311
Placenta, I. 37; II. 55
Pleiades, II. 286
Plough, I. 327; II. 31
Poetry, I. 399; II. 154, 157, 167, 344
Poison, I. 366; II. 60
Pole, I. 89; II. 328
Political sense, I. 461
» system, I. 458; II. 134
Politeness (rules of), I. 104. 123, 320
Polyandry, see Matlulana
Polygamy, I. 225, 271; II. 461
Portuguese (chroniciers), I. 25. 355
Possessions, II. 344, 434, 435 & sq.
Pots, I. 306; II. 100, 357
Pottery, II. 96
Prayers, I. 53, 111. 142, 161, 205, 213, 245, 293, 369, 441; II. 70, 364 & sq., 383 & sq., 404, 416, 443, 454
Pregnancy, I. 166, 188, 341, 490; II. 349, 471
Presages, II. 489
Priests, Priesthood, II. 347, 357. 376, 413, 473
Primitive population, I. 23
Promiscuity, I. 251
Property, I. 419; II. 532
Proverbs, I. 177, 477; II. 156
Psanyi, half digested grass found in the stomach of sacrificed goats, I. 101, 161, 214, 441, 454; II. 59, 299, 376, 380, 415
Psikwembu, pl. of *Shikwembu*, ancestor-god
Psirungulu, pl. of *Shirungulu*
Psirwalo, pl. of *shirwalo*
Psychology (Native), II. 338
Puberty, I. 71, 100, 342; II. 348
Pumpkins, I. 185, 367; II. 13
Purgatives, II. 421

Queen Moth, II 84
Queens, I. 389; II. 83

Raft, II. 110

Rain, I. 107, 283, 291; II. 29, 292 & sq., 392, 399, 507
Rainbow, II. 289, 400
Rainmaking, II 297
Reconciliation (Sacrifice of), I. 208; II. 370
Rectum, I. 185
Redhibition, I. 413
Reedbuck, I. 238; II. 497
Regalia, I. 359 & sq.
Relatives-in-law, I. 107, 143, 229, 237, 265; II. 177
Religion, I. 167, 376, 421; II. 100, 300, 346 & sq., 405, 454, 533
Respect, I. 230, 357; II. 530
Retirement, I. 357, 441; II. 457, 475
Rhinoceros, I. 378; II. 441
Rhythm, II. 266
Rice, II. 11
Riddles, I. 177, 319, 382; II. 160 & sq.
Right side, I. 138, 297
Rikatla, I. 6, 141; II. 5
Ring, I. 259, 359; II. 84
Rivers, II. 301
Rivimbi, II. 298, 327
Roads, I. 21; II, 9, 327
Roof, I. 286, 291; II. 88
Ronga group, I. 16
Roots, II. 58, 73, 309; II. 361, 416
Rubber, II. 129, 131
Rwa, I. 18

Sabbath day, II. 28
Sabie, I. 12, 19
Sacerdotal class, II. 277
Sacredness, I. 355; II. 533
Sacrifices, I. 57, 101, 111, 119, 142, 161, 205, 245, 254, 292, 368; II. 52, 70, 355, 362 & sq.
Sacrifices of bitterness, II. 364
Sailors' songs, II. 189, 259
Sala fruit, I. 177; II. 16, 73, 229, 352
Saliva, I. 311; II. 7, 58, 364, 380
Salt, I. 96, 181; II. 34, 128, 419
Salutation, I. 321, 333
Satiric poetry, II 177
Scale (major), II. 254, 266
Scapegoat, II. 425
School, I. 93; II. 269
Science, I. 65; II. 197, 305, 321, 404, 488, 522
Sea, II. 298, 303, 457
Seasons, II. 20
Secret societies, I. 197; II. 462, 472, 518
Seeds, II. 10
Semen, I. 39, 94, 489
Semitic, I. 34, 73
Senility, I. 132, 211
Separation rites, I. 74, 123, 168, 298
Seven, I. 237
Sex in medicines, II. 415
« in sacrifices, II. 381
Sexual act, II. 335
Sexual life, I. 7, 92, 178, 274; II. 373, 471
Sexual relations, I. 55, 59, 79, 97, 113, 114, 133, 154, 155, 188, 290, 295, 364, 421, 441, 445, 454, 490; II, 57, 69, 72, 336, 374, 387, 429, 430, 434, 449
Sexual rites, I, 144, 152, 155, 201, 290, 295, 488
Shadow, II. 339

Sham fight, I. 109, 122
Shangaan, I. 15.
Sheep, I. 45; II. 52, 496
Shell, II. 500
Shibongo, family name, I. 333
Shield, I. 427, 443
Shifado, I. 39, 95, 199, 488
Shigango, custom of courting girls
Shigiyane, wood pile, I. 119
Shikanekiso, seat of a Portuguese Administrator.
Shikwembu, ancestor-god
Shipalapala, trumpet, I. 405
Shirengele, broken pot
Shirungulu, *shitjungulu*, religious amulet
Shirwalo, beer brought as a present
Shitjhuti, shadow, II. 339
Silence, I. 191, 341, 388, 440, 445; II. 29, 61, 400, 433, 447
Sin, II. 387, 531
Sirnames, I. 474
Sister, I. 217
Skin, I. 44; II. 77, 80, 129, 447
Slain, I. 451
Slayers, I. 453; II. 56
Sleep, I. 91; II. 340
Small pox, II. 423, 432
Smearing (the floor), I. 42, 294, 305
Smell out, II. 473, 481
Smoke, II. 300, 519
Smoking, I. 145; II. 101
Snail, II. 315, 489
Snake, II. 230, 317, 355, 359, 419, 467, 489
Sneezing, II. 337
Snuff box, II. 85, 116
Social groups, I. 121, 144, 167, 179, 262
Soil, II. 1
Son, I. 208, 217, 268
Songs, I, 75, 82, 88, 143, 148, 160, 174, 205, 206, 347, 375, 399, 434, 450; II. 24, 56, 128, 168 & sq., 195, 255 & sq., 354, 391, 392, 402, 441, 445, 482
Sorghum, II. 11
Soul, II. 339, 343
Sowing, II. 23
Spelonken, I. 18, 27; II. 5
Spirit, II. 58, 339
Spitting, I. 119; II. 287, 337, 406, 439
Spoon, I. 145, 190; II. 112
» Elias, I. 3, 414, 493
Sprinkling, I. 149, 152, 440, 443
Square, I. 136, 281, 302
Stars, II. 283, 489
Statuettes, II. 118
Statute labour, I. 301, 379
Stealing, I. 63
Sterility, I. 188; II. 423, 426
Stone age, II. 121, 534
Stones, I. 177, 365; II. 304, 317, 500
Storehouses, I. 285; II. 27, 94
Storms, II. 403, 466
Strainer, II. 39, 108
Strangers, I. 135, 166, 282; II. 6, 437
Strategy, I. 447
String, I. 175; II. 110, 391
Subliminal, II. 455
Succession, I. 133, 163 272, 303, 343, 344, 382
Sugar cane, II. 14, 43
Suicide, I. 166, 264, 479; II. 349
Sun, II. 149, 281, 343

Sungakati, midwife
Sungi, circumcision lodge, I. 77
» magical root, I. 157; II. 420, 329, 434
Suto language, I. 29
Swaziland, I. 23
Sweat, II. 337
Sweet potato, II. 13
Switzerland, I. 50, 138; II. 323
Sycophants, I. 128; II. 498
Syntax, II. 142
Syphilis, II 46, 432

Taboo-
agricultural, II. 12, 13, 19, 28
classification of, II. 525
cosmic, II. 526
definition of, I. 36, 45, 524
feminine, I. 184
for chiefs, I. 354
military, I. 454
of defilement, I. 51; II. 294, see defilement
of drink, I. 47, 83
of folk tales, II. 192
of hunting, II. 57 & sq.
of new customs, II. 29, 134
of pottery manufacture, II. 99
of prevision, I. 44, 238; II. 26, 301
of property, II. 42
of relatives-in-law, I. 107, 237, 239
origin of, II. 30, 192, 528
physiological, II. 525.
relation with law, custom and disgust, I. 44, 182, 374; II. 67
religious, II. 352 & sq., 366, 528
sanction of, II. 529
sexual, see sexual relations
social, II. 527
suspension of, II. 529
sympathetic, II. 525
totemic, I. 327
travellers', II. 56, 123
Tala, ash heap
Tales, see Folk tales
Tattooing, I. 179, 454; II. 82
Taxation, I. 377
Teeth, I. 47, 179. 442; II. 296, 419
Tembe, I. 16, 22, 299, 332, 382, 436; II. 125, 400
Testicles, I. 185, 490
Thatch, II. 89
Theft, I. 419; II. 403, 465, 530
Thonga name, I. 14
» language, I. 28
» tribe, I. 13
Thorn, I. 115, 195, 445; II. 448
Threshing, II. 26, 29
Threshold, I. 286; II. 92
Throne, I. 359
Thunder, II. 290, 392, 405.
Thwaza, rite of exorcism, II. 446, 451
Tide, II. 303
Tihuhlu, pl. of huhlu, I. 147, 367; II. 18, 129
Tilo, see Heaven
Timbila, Native xylophone
Timhamba, pl. of *mhamba*
Timbore, etc., particles fallen in the hondlola rite
Tinamu, pl. of *namu*
Tingoya, hair of nurses and magicians, II. 472
Tinhweti, menses

Tintjebe, amulet bags containing protective drugs for slayers, I. 455
Tjeba, fishing, II. 70
Tjhumba, to take a part of the lobolo or of the inheritance, I, 208, 253.
Toad, I. 86; II. 195, 201
Tobacco, I. 116, 238; II. 14, 87, 328, 365.
Tobane, I 4
Tomatoe, II. 14
Tonga, I. 16
Tongue, I. 185
Tortoise, II. 66, 209, 317, 499
Totemism, I. 355: II. 58
» secondary, I, 338
Trade, II. 46. 121, 122
Trances, II, 438. 454
Traps, II. 54
Trees, II. 30, 139, 310, 344, 359
Tree of the village, I. 293
Tribal life, I. 327, 464
Tribunal, I. 407, 460
Tromba. II. 459
Trumpets, I. 404, 405, 430; II. 251. 354
Tschauke, I. 23
Tsonga, I. 15
Tsu, see Sacrifices
Tswa, I. 18, 271
Tunes, II. 255 & sq.
Twig, I. 142. 290
Twins, I. 40; II. 296, 335, 394 & sq., 401

Umbilical cord., I. 36 41
Unsheathing (of personality), II. 340, 451, 459, 463
Urine, II. 291
Uterine nephew. I. 77. 146, 158, 164, 200, 205, 212, 228, 248, 255; II. 349, 367, 375. 461
Uterus. II. 254

Van Gennep, I. 74
Vapour bath, see Hungula
Varan, II. 207
Veil, I 115, 443
Venda, I. 18,72; II. 121,127,326
Venus, I. 74; II. 286
Verbs, II. 141
Vermin, II. 234, 404
Vernacular, II. 269
Vertigo, II. 429
Viguet, I. 6
Village, I. 126, 216, 280, 324; II. 505
Visits, I. 309, 405
Vituperator, I. 401
Vocabulary, I. 473

Wailing, I. 143
War, I. 272
Causes of, I. 384
» charms, I. 388
» -like proclivities, I. 32, 332, 422, 438
» medicine, I. 439
» songs, I. 434; II. 260 & sq.
» Ronga-Portuguese, I. 482
» with Sikororo, I. 484
Wasps, I. 68
Water, II. 301, 334
Wax, I. 129; II. 129
» ring, II. 129
W-C, I. 281
Weaning, I. 56; II. 397
Weapons, I. 425

Wedding, I. 110; II. 177
Whistling, I. 296
White people, I. 181, 184, 475; II. 170, 257, 329
Widow, I. 163, 197—210, 264
Widower, I. 199
Wife, I. 217, 229, 272
Will, II. 296
Will-o'-the-wisp, II. 463
Wind, II. 288, 294, 416
Witch, I. 191; II. 460 & sq
Witchcraft, I. 196, 244, 416. II. 344, 460 & sq
Woman (position of), I. 264, 297
Woodpile, I. 112, 115, 119
Woods (sacred), I. 167; II. 300, 351 & sq, 387, 399
Worms (intestinal), I 46; II. 431
Writing, II. 136
Xylophone, II. 253

Yandla, rite of presentation to the moon
Yawning, II. 337, 438
Year, I. 376; II. 415. 456
Yila, see Taboo
Yimba, to circumcise
Yindlu, house
» *ya ñwana*, placenta

Zebra, I. 238
Zili, II. 242
Zulu, I. 33, 332, 390
» conquest, I. 27, 332, 423
» customs, II. 78, 93
» folklore and religion, II. 199, 329, 410, 436
» language, I. 29; II. 348
Zululand, I. 23, 464

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